



PHD

**Comparative public administration: The dynamics of local administrative reform in Britain and Nigeria.**

Owojaiye, Gbenga S.

*Award date:*  
1981

*Awarding institution:*  
University of Bath

[Link to publication](#)

**Alternative formats**

If you require this document in an alternative format, please contact:  
[openaccess@bath.ac.uk](mailto:openaccess@bath.ac.uk)

Copyright of this thesis rests with the author. Access is subject to the above licence, if given. If no licence is specified above, original content in this thesis is licensed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International (CC BY-NC-ND 4.0) Licence (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>). Any third-party copyright material present remains the property of its respective owner(s) and is licensed under its existing terms.

**Take down policy**

If you consider content within Bath's Research Portal to be in breach of UK law, please contact: [openaccess@bath.ac.uk](mailto:openaccess@bath.ac.uk) with the details. Your claim will be investigated and, where appropriate, the item will be removed from public view as soon as possible.

COMPARATIVE PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION: THE  
DYNAMICS OF LOCAL ADMINISTRATIVE REFORM  
IN BRITAIN AND NIGERIA.

submitted by

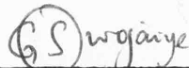
GBENGA S. OWOJAIYE, B.A. (Hons), (A.B.U. Zaria), M.A. (Sheffield)  
for the degree of Ph.D.  
of the University of Bath  
1981

COPYRIGHT

Attention is drawn to the fact that copyright of this thesis rests with its author. This copy of the thesis has been supplied on condition that anyone who consults it is understood to recognize that its copyright rests with its author and that no quotation from the thesis and no information derived from it may be published without the prior written consent of the author.

This thesis may be made available for consultation within the University Library and may be photocopied or lent to other libraries for the purposes of consultation.

Signed by



G.S. OWOJAIYE

ProQuest Number: U319225

All rights reserved

INFORMATION TO ALL USERS

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.



ProQuest U319225

Published by ProQuest LLC(2015). Copyright of the Dissertation is held by the Author.

All rights reserved.

This work is protected against unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code.  
Microform Edition © ProQuest LLC.

ProQuest LLC  
789 East Eisenhower Parkway  
P.O. Box 1346  
Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Since I started this research the number of people to whom I have become indebted for help in completion of this thesis has increased exponentially. The scope of the study and the alternating locus of research required that I enlist help from a number of people. As a consequence I find the main difficulty in setting out these acknowledgements lies in applying the selectivity imposed by space limitations while assuring appropriate credit is attributed to those whose contributions have been so important.

I owe a particular debt of gratitude to Dr.B.C.Smith, Reader in Public Administration, who, as my doctoral supervisor was generous with his time and gave thoughtful criticism, advice and intellectual stimulation during a long period of gestation. This thesis owes a great deal to his guidance when I was losing my way, to his criticism when I was losing clarity and to his encouragement when I was losing heart. Among the many people who gave valuable assistance and advice I am particularly indebted to Professor Breunese and Dr Asmerom of the Free University, Amsterdam, Jeffrey Stanyer of Exeter University, and Dr Daudu of Ahmadu Belle University, Zaria. All of these people and many others contributed greatly to operationalising the study and effecting introductions to new contacts. I am also indebted to the various ministries of local government in Nigeria. Of the libraries I worked in, I should particularly like to thank the staff of the following: University of Ibadan, A.B.U., Zaria, University of Ife, Bristol University, Institute of Development Studies and the University of Sussex, Brighton, Aston University and the University of Birmingham, London School of Economics and Political Science, School of Oriental and African Studies and the Institute of Commonwealth Studies, London. Particular mention must be made of Tony Holbrook, a librarian at the



University of Bath.

The research would not have been possible without the financial sponsorship I received from the Federal Government of Nigeria. I also thank all members of my family, especially Chief Owojaiye, for their financial and moral support. My thanks and love are due to my aging mother who simply told me: 'Go to the UK and gain knowledge'. Finally, my thanks and apologies are also due to my wife and daughter, Abiodun and Olubodun: thanks for not only suffering without complaint, the privations attendant on a research as this, but for being a constant source of encouragement and for providing an atmosphere of emotional stability without which this thesis might not have been completed; apologies for divided loyalty between them and this project. To all those named above I wish to express my profound gratitude; that gratitude is directed as well to those many others who are not specifically identified. Responsibility for the contents of this thesis, needless to say, is mine alone.

## CONTENTS

| <u>Contents</u>   | <u>Page</u> |
|---|-------------|
| SUMMARY   | i           |
| INTRODUCTION  | 1           |
| Chapter 1 <u>COMPARATIVE PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND THE THEORY</u> |             |
| <u>OF ADMINISTRATIVE REFORM</u>                                   | 14          |
| INTRODUCTION  | 14          |
| SIGNIFICANCE OF COMPARATIVE STUDIES                               | 15          |
| THE THEORY OF ADMINISTRATIVE REFORM                               | 17          |
| <u>Introduction</u>   | 17          |
| <u>What is Administrative Reform</u>                              | 22          |
| <u>Administrative Reform as a Process</u>                         | 27          |
| AWARENESS OF THE NEED FOR ADMINISTRATIVE REFORM                   | 31          |
| FORMULATION OF OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES OF ADMINISTRATIVE        |             |
| REFORM  | 34          |
| <u>Strategy</u>   | 37          |
| IMPLEMENTATION  | 40          |
| EVALUATION  | 46          |
| CONCLUSION  | 49          |
| Chapter 2 <u>A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE : NIGERIA AND BRITAIN</u>   | 54          |
| INTRODUCTION  | 54          |
| NIGERIA   | 54          |
| PRINCIPLES AND APPLICATION OF INDIRECT RULE                       | 56          |
| <u>The Northern Region and Indirect Rule</u>                      | 58          |
| <u>Southern Nigeria and Indirect Rule</u>                         | 61          |
| <u>Amalgamation and the Extension of Indirect Rule to</u>         |             |
| <u>the Western and Eastern Provinces</u>                          | 64          |
| <u>Decline of Indirect Rule and the Need for Reform</u>           | 67          |

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| BRITAIN  | 73  |
| <u>Mediaeval and Tudor Period</u>  | 73  |
| <u>The Eighteenth Century</u>  | 75  |
| <u>The Nineteenth Century</u>  | 77  |
| <u>Nineteenth Century Socio-Economic Change</u>                            | 80  |
| <u>Structural Reforms : 1880-1944</u>                                      | 85  |
| <br>Chapter 3 <u>DIAGNOSIS : SOCIO-ECONOMIC FACTORS AFFECTING THE NEED</u> |     |
| <u>FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM</u>   | 93  |
| INTRODUCTION   | 93  |
| SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHANGE  | 100 |
| <u>Increase in Population</u>  | 102 |
| <u>Advances in Medicine</u>  | 106 |
| <u>Expansion of Educational Facilities</u>                                 | 108 |
| <u>Increased Local Government Functions</u>                                | 110 |
| <u>The Growth of Communications</u>  | 121 |
| <u>Some Implications of Socio-Economic Changes for</u>                     |     |
| <u>Local Government</u>  | 126 |
| <br>Chapter 4 <u>DIAGNOSIS : POLITICAL CHANGES AND THE CHANGING SYSTEM</u> |     |
| <u>OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT</u>   | 132 |
| INTRODUCTION   | 132 |
| POLITICAL CHANGE   | 134 |
| THE FRANCHISE  | 137 |
| NATIONALISM AND THE SECOND WORLD WAR                                       | 142 |
| CENTRALIZATION   | 146 |
| PARTY POLITICS IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT   | 155 |
| PROFESSIONALISM  | 165 |
| CONCLUSION   | 167 |

|           |  |     |
|-----------|--|-----|
| Chapter 5 | <u>DIAGNOSIS : THE DEFECTS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT</u>     | 168 |
|           | INTRODUCTION   | 168 |
|           | CRITIQUE   | 172 |
|           | LOCAL GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE                             | 177 |
|           | <u>The Pre-Reform Structure</u>                        | 179 |
|           | TOWN AND COUNTRY CRISIS                                | 194 |
|           | <u>The Conurbations and the Regions</u>                | 196 |
|           | <u>The Race for County Borough Status</u>              | 203 |
|           | LOCAL COUNCILS, COUNCILLOR CALIBRE AND THE ELECTORATE  | 207 |
|           | <u>Local Authorities and the Public</u>                | 213 |
|           | CENTRAL-LOCAL GOVERNMENT RELATIONS                     | 216 |
| Chapter 6 | <u>REFORM OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES</u>                | 223 |
|           | INTRODUCTION   | 223 |
|           | FUNCTIONS AND SIZE                                     | 229 |
|           | DEMOCRACY  | 232 |
|           | EFFICIENCY   | 236 |
|           | <u>Manpower Management</u>                             | 237 |
|           | <u>Co-ordination of Policy and Administration</u>      | 241 |
|           | <u>Management Techniques</u>                           | 245 |
|           | NATIONAL STABILITY AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT      | 246 |
|           | + <u>National Unity and Stability</u>                  | 246 |
|           | + <u>Socio-Economic Development</u>                    | 248 |
|           | STRATEGIES   | 252 |
|           | + <u>Evidence and Consultations</u>                    | 258 |
|           | + <u>Research</u>                                      | 260 |
|           | <u>Royal Commission's Recommendations</u>              | 263 |
|           | <u>Reaction to Commission's Report</u>                 | 266 |
|           | + <u>Local Government Reform Principles in Nigeria</u> | 268 |

|           |   |     |
|-----------|---|-----|
| Chapter 7 | <u>IMPLEMENTATION</u>                     | 271 |
| ✕         | INTRODUCTION                              | 271 |
|           | THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS 1971-2            | 276 |
|           | <u>The White Paper</u>                    | 276 |
|           | <u>The Bill</u>                           | 279 |
|           | <u>Local Government Act 1972</u>          | 282 |
| ✕         | <u>Implementation in Nigeria</u>          | 286 |
|           | THE REFORMED LOCAL GOVERNMENT SYSTEM      | 289 |
|           | <u>Structure</u>                          | 289 |
|           | <u>Urban Areas</u>                        | 294 |
|           | FUNCTIONS OF NEW LOCAL AUTHORITIES        | 295 |
|           | FINANCE                                   | 297 |
|           | THE REFORM AND TRADITIONAL RULERS         | 302 |
|           | MEMBERSHIP OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCILS   | 306 |
|           | COMMITTEES                                | 308 |
|           | THE ROLE OF 'HOMO POLITICUS'              | 311 |
|           | CONCLUSION                                | 314 |
| Chapter 8 | EVALUATION                                | 316 |
|           | INTRODUCTION                              | 316 |
|           | THE PURPOSE OF EVALUATION                 | 316 |
|           | FUNCTION AND SIZE                         | 325 |
|           | DEMOCRACY                                 | 336 |
|           | <u>Representation</u>                     | 336 |
|           | <u>Political Parties and Democracy</u>    | 342 |
|           | <u>Participation</u>                      | 344 |
|           | <u>Central-Local Government Relations</u> | 348 |
|           | <u>Policy Control</u>                     | 352 |
|           | <u>Budgetary Control</u>                  | 358 |

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| <u>Control over Internal Organization</u>   | 360 |
| <u>Centralization of Functions</u>  | 363 |
| <u>Suspension and Dissolution</u>   | 365 |
| <u>Conclusion</u>   | 369 |
| EFFICIENCY  | 373 |
| SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND NATIONAL STABILITY   | 381 |
| <br>Chapter 9 <u>RECOMMENDATIONS</u>  | 386 |
| + INTRODUCTION  | 386 |
| + LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  | 394 |
| + <u>The Objectives of Community Development</u>  | 395 |
| <u>Britain</u>  | 397 |
| + <u>Nigeria</u>  | 402 |
| + THE AGE-SET SYSTEM  | 407 |
| + GROWTH POLE STRATEGY : A SUGGESTED COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  |     |
| + APPROACH FOR NIGERIA  | 416 |
| <u>Growth Poles as Instruments of Integration</u>   | 418 |
| + CONCLUSION  | 429 |
| <br>Chapter 10 <u>CONCLUSION</u>  | 434 |
| <br>APPENDICES  |     |
| Appendix I    LOCAL GOVERNMENT FUNCTIONS IN NIGERIA AND BRITAIN   | 442 |
| Appendix II   POWERS AND FUNCTIONS OF SECRETARIES OF LOCAL<br>GOVERNMENTS IN NIGERIA  | 448 |
| Appendix III   ROYAL COMMISSION ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN ENGLAND<br>1966-1969 : MAIN CONCLUSIONS AND HOW THEY WERE<br>REACHED | 449 |

|              |  |       |
|--------------|--|-------|
| Appendix IV  | A COMPARISON OF THE VARIOUS REFORM PROPOSALS : |       |
|              | ENGLAND AND WALES 1969-72                      | . 455 |
| BIBLIOGRAPHY |  | 459   |

# LIST OF TABLES

| <u>Table Number</u> |  | <u>Page</u> |
|---------------------|--|-------------|
| 1.1                 | REFORM TYPES, REFORM OBJECTIVES AND KINDS OF BUREAUCRACIES   | 43          |
| 3.1                 | POPULATION OF PRINCIPAL URBAN CENTRES IN NIGERIA   | 104         |
| 3.2                 | BIRTH AND DEATH RATE IN NIGERIA  | 108         |
| 3.3                 | EXPANSION OF EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES IN NIGERIA   | 109         |
| 3.4                 | MERCHANT SHIPPING FLEET (NIGERIA)  | 122         |
| 3.5                 | MOTOR VEHICLES IN USE IN NIGERIA   | 122         |
| 3.6                 | INTERNATIONAL SEA-BORNE SHIPPING (NIGERIA)   | 122         |
| 3.7                 | CIVIL AVIATION (NIGERIA)   | 123         |
| 4.1                 | MEMBERSHIP OF SELECTED NATIVE AUTHORITIES IN THE FORMER WESTERN PROVINCES OF NIGERIA : 1944-49                           | 140         |
| 4.2                 | PATRONAGE DISTRIBUTION IN TWO COUNCILS IN BRITAIN 1955-60  | 161         |
| 4.3                 | PERCENTAGE OF COUNCILLORS BY MAJOR OCCUPATIONS : THREE WESTERN NIGERIA COUNCILS, 1959-63                                 | 163         |
| 4.4                 | PERCENTAGE OF COUNCILLORS BY EDUCATION : THREE WESTERN NIGERIA COUNCILS, 1952-63   | 164         |
| 5.1                 | POPULATION, NUMBER AND TYPE OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN ENGLAND AND WALES, 1964  | 181         |
| 5.2                 | SIZE, NUMBER AND TYPE OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN ENGLAND AND WALES, 1965  | 182-3       |
| 5.3                 | POPULATION, AREA, NUMBER OF TAXPAYERS AND TOTAL RECURRENT REVENUE OF SOME LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN NORTHERN NIGERIA: 1973/74 | 193         |
| 7.1                 | POPULATION RANGES FOR EACH TYPE OF AUTHORITY : ENGLAND AND WALES   | 285         |
| 7.2                 | RATEABLE VALUE RANGES FOR EACH TYPE OF AUTHORITY : ENGLAND AND WALES   | 285         |



|     |  |     |
|-----|--|-----|
| 7.3 | POPULATION VARIATION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS IN SOME STATES IN NIGERIA, 1976   | 290 |
| 7.4 | REVENUE RANGES OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS IN SOME STATES IN NIGERIA, 1977-8   | 291 |
| 7.5 | KANO STATE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA   | 293 |
| 7.6 | REVENUE ALLOCATION/GRANTS TO LOCAL GOVERNMENTS IN SELECTED COUNTRIES, 1970-77  | 299 |
| 7.7 | ESTIMATED REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCILS IN 1977/8, KANO STATE   | 301 |
| 7.8 | REGISTERED ELECTORS FOR 1959 AND 1976 ELECTIONS IN NIGERIA   | 303 |
| 7.9 | ALLOCATION OF CONSTITUENCIES PER LOCAL GOVERNMENT : THE 1976 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS IN KWARA STATE                                       | 307 |
| 8.1 | OPINION POLL RESULT ABOUT WHAT ELECTORS IN NIGERIA WOULD DO IF THEY FELT THAT THEIR LOCAL AUTHORITY OUGHT OR OUGHT NOT TO BE DOING SOMETHING | 340 |
| 8.2 | LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTION, 1976 : DISTRIBUTION OF SEATS AND NOMINATION OF CANDIDATES   | 341 |
| 8.3 | ACTUAL VOTERS AS PERCENTAGE OF REGISTERED ELECTORS IN THE 1976 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS IN NIGERIA   | 341 |
| 8.4 | DISTRIBUTION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING BETWEEN SERVICES, 1962-80 : EASTERN REGION AND ANAMBRA STATE                                       | 354 |
| 8.5 | LOCAL GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURE IN THE NORTHERN REGION AND KADUNA STATE   | 354 |
| 8.6 | DISTRIBUTION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING BETWEEN SERVICES, 1962-80 : WESTERN NIGERIA AND OGUN STATE   | 380 |
| 9.1 | RURAL-URBAN ALLOCATIONS IN NIGERIA : 1975-80 DEVELOPMENT PLAN  | 403 |

|       |  |     |
|-------|--|-----|
| ✓ 9.2 | AGE-SET STRUCTURE AMONG THE YAGBA TRIBE OF KWARA STATE,<br>NIGERIA   | 409 |
| 6 9.3 | COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS IN IKWERE/ETCHE LOCAL<br>GOVERNMENT AREA, RIVERS STATE 1971-79                | 413 |
| ✓ 9.4 | COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS EXECUTED BY THE PEOPLE<br>OF EDU, KWARA STATE, 1977-8                         | 413 |
| ✓ 9.5 | NUMBER AND COST OF SELF-HELP PROJECTS IN KWARA STATE BY<br>LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND BY SOURCES OF FUNDS, 1972-76 | 414 |

# LIST OF DIAGRAMS AND FIGURES

| <u>Diagram/Figure<br/>Number</u>  | <u>Page</u> |
|---|-------------|
| 1.1 THE ADMINISTRATIVE REFORM PROCESS   | 27          |
| 1.2 THE ADMINISTRATIVE REFORM PROCESS : A CHAIN OF DECISIONS                            | 31          |
| 1.3 THE ADMINISTRATIVE REFORM PROCESS   | 32          |
| 2.1 LOCAL GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE : ENGLAND AND WALES 1899-1974<br>(LONDON : 1899-1963)    | 88          |
| 6.1 THE PROPOSED LOCAL GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE IN<br>ENGLAND AND WALES      | 238         |
| 6.2 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION IN NIGERIA                             | 239         |
| 6.3 COMMITTEE STRUCTURE : NON-METROPOLICAN COUNTY (BAINS<br>COMMITTEE PROPOSALS)        | 243         |
| 6.4 REDCLIFFE-MAUD COMMISSION'S PROPOSALS AND MR SENIOR'S<br>PROPOSALS                  | 265         |
| 7.1 LOCAL GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE IN ENGLAND AND WALES                                     | 283         |
| 9.1 A PROPOSED DECENTRALIZED COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT<br>ADMINISTRATION SCHEME FOR NIGERIA | 426         |

## SUMMARY

The objects of this thesis are to examine the conditions which necessitated local administrative reforms in Nigeria and Britain. It also examines the process of administrative reforms in both countries in a comparative and historical context. Administrative reform is a continuous activity, a process, and the local government reforms in both countries have been treated in sequential trends: Diagnosis, Formulation of Objectives and Strategies of Administrative Reform, Implementation, Evaluation, and Recommendations.

The study concentrates on socio-economic and political changes in both countries, and on changing contemporary views concerning the processes and purposes of local governmental administration. Local government became maladjusted because it did not keep pace with these societal changes, and hence the need for reform.

We also examine the relationship between the theory and practice of administrative reform; and the origins of pressures for reform, the processes by which reform proposals were advanced, and the ways and means by which they were implemented (or shelved).

The thesis is structured round a number of variables and hypothetical questions which were tested in the body of the thesis, such as: Was local government reform necessary in both countries because unchanging values could no longer be realised through an outdated administrative system? Or had values changed so that reform was needed? Can a developing country (Nigeria) and a developed one (Britain) have similar reform objectives and strategies? How true is Lee's hypothesis that time and leadership are two crucial variables in reform implementation? Answers to these and other hypothetical questions are provided in the thesis. The conclusion, based on empirical evidences, is that for any administrative reform to be successful in achieving its

objectives - efficiency, democracy, socio-economic development and national unity - the citizens must be actively involved. And it is this observation that leads us to formulate hypotheses for local government reform, local development and participation through the use of the age-set institution in Nigeria and neighbourhood councils in Britain (though the latter are dealt with very briefly).

## INTRODUCTION

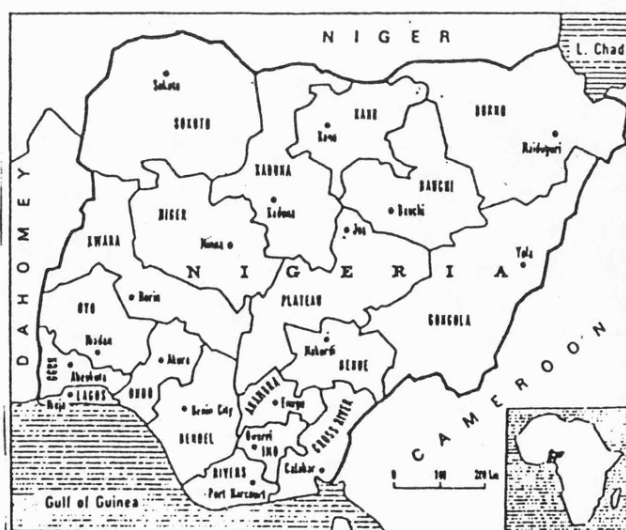
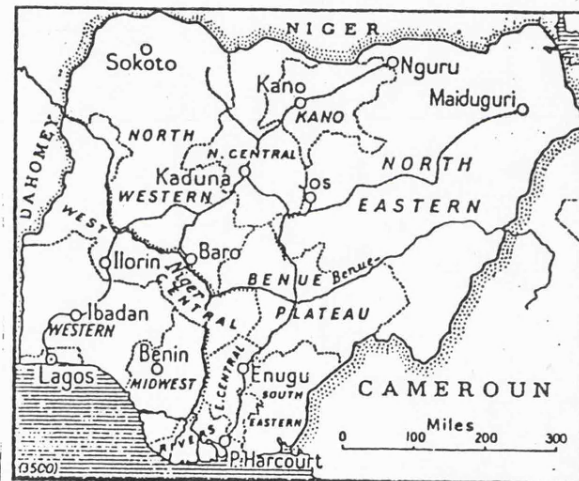
This thesis, like any other transnational comparative analysis, involved my having to carry out the necessary fieldwork in two countries: Britain and Nigeria. I made two trips to Nigeria not only to collect materials but also to interview people - councillors, local government officers and citizens who are affected by the 1976 local government reform. In all I covered six states - Kaduna, Kano, Kwara, Niger, Oyo and Rivers (see map). There were 238 respondents to my questionnaires, 78 of them being officers and officials of local government. I had to tape record oral evidence from a number of people because of the high rate of illiteracy in Nigeria. These evidences formed the substratum of this thesis, especially chapters 8 and 9, 'Evaluation' and 'Recommendations', with the theory of administrative reform forming the superstratum. I proceeded from the empirical evidence and went on to test my findings in the light of available administrative reform theory. My conclusion, based on these evidences, is that for any administrative reform to be successful in achieving its objectives - efficiency, democracy, socio-economic development and national unity - the citizens must be actively involved.

As Rowat (1980, p.XV) says, the comparative study of local government reform and politics is at such a rudimentary stage that one must start with the basic structural information, which itself is extremely difficult to gather, especially in Nigeria as any researcher will tell you.

Furthermore, although the study of politics rather than institutions is currently popular with political scientists and students of public administration, attempts at studying local government reform on a comparative basis have not been notably successful because we do



1967 STATES



not yet have a deep enough understanding of the varying political cultures involved. If academic books about reorganisation do not embody their author's own proposals for 'reform', then they are usually content to describe the proposals of others and blandly present the debate. In Nigeria, and to some extent in Britain, there is no study which discusses the various facets of reorganisation as they relate to each other and to the environment - social, political, cultural and economic; which sees reorganisation as about who will control and benefit from local government; and which seeks to understand it all by looking at it in the context of the developing political economy. Case studies of local policy-making and reform tend to be isolated and a-historical. At its most basic, there is no study which situates local government reform in the wider societal changes, away from the usual tradition of debate, and even the assessments of the effects of reorganisation are of limited value because of lack of empirical research which would enable academics to make useful and proven recommendations which would benefit the ordinary citizen (see however, Buxton, 1973; Redcliffe-Maud and Wood, 1974; Dearlove, 1979; Lagroye and Wright, 1979; Pearce, 1980). More importantly, I know of no writer who has attempted to make a systematic comparative analysis of administrative reform in a developing country and a developed one. These and other problems or aberrations are what I have attempted to solve in this thesis. If the arguments I have advanced provide a better understanding of reorganisation than any currently available in the literature, then this research has been worthwhile.

Students of public administration are struck by the fact that the 'new ideas' which emerged in disciplines related to public administration did not affect the approach to administrative reform. Even in the United States, where the society is keen on innovations, the reform attempts of the late fifties adhered more or less to traditional organisation theory. The reasons for this are the conser-



vative tendencies inherent in government administration and the sequence in which ideas change first, then values, then finally and last, basic emotions and actions.

The comprehensive approach to local government reform analysed in this thesis is influenced by an amalgam of the current ideas which emerged recently in General Systems Theory, Comparative Politics and Public Administration, and modern organisation theory. The framework of my research did not start with the theory. I started from the empirical facts of the local government reforms in Britain (more specifically, England and Wales) in 1974 and Nigeria in 1976, and tried to test my findings and the hypotheses I formulated in the light of current administrative reform theory. This seemingly 'unorthodox' orientation stimulated clear thinking and saved me from becoming a 'prisoner of theory'. Thus my style of writing could have been like Conrad's (Lord Jim) peripeteia or 'reverse time sequence' in which case the theoretical Chapter 1 could have come at the end of the thesis. That it comes at the beginning did not change my research findings and hypotheses, instead it became invaluable for me as I was able to compare and evaluate my hypotheses with administrative reform theories. The aim is to try and disprove theorists who argue that it is impossible to advance a theory of administrative reform which is equally applicable to a developed and a developing country.

The General Systems Theory was developed to meet a need felt by a large number of behavioural scientists. The theory is concerned with the elaboration of a systematic theoretical framework for description of the general relationships of the empirical world. It is based on the assumption that there exists models, principles and laws that apply to generalised systems or their subclasses, irrespective of their particular kind, the nature of their component elements, and the relations of 'forces' between them (Van Bertalanffy, 1956).

General systems theory attempts to make assertions applicable to all systems, whether physical or behavioural. The principal points of the idea of a system are: (a) relationships between a system and its environment; (b) interaction between several systems; and (c) interdependence between the various parts of the system (Blalock, 1959). I have used the systems concept as an approach to organisation change, that is, that local government could not remain static, unreformed while its environment - social, political, cultural, technological, economic - was changing.

The Structural-Functional approach emphasises cross-disciplinary research and attempts to study political systems within a wider theoretical framework. Almond and Coleman's (1960, pp.3-64) 'input-output' model is based on the central concept of 'system' involving an integration of both structures and functions. The following are the main features of their 'input-output' model: (a) The political system is a sub-system of a certain culture, being distinguished from other sub-systems by incorporation of the mechanism for control of violence in the whole culture; (b) all political systems have structures and functions. Political structures are multi-functional. Comparison of structures of various cultures is insufficient, because the significance of a structure lies in its functioning; (c) political systems are mixed systems in the cultural sense. Formal-legal aspects, and diffuse and particularistic aspects are combined in the political structure; and (d) input functions in political systems include political socialisation and recruitment, interest articulation, interest aggregation and political communication. This approach is invaluable to my analysis, for if local government is a sub-system of the political system which is a sub-system of the whole culture, it means then that local government must be reformed as the whole system changes.

The Comparative Public Administration approach as elaborated by Riggs (1962) adopts 'ecology' as its basic concept. He elaborates a wide conceptual framework for constructing sub-models in relation to various aspects of both Western and non-Western societies. He designates the models of modern, traditional and developing countries as 'refracted', 'fused', and 'prismatic' respectively. He goes on to identify three main characteristics of the prismatic society: heterogeneity, formalism and overlapping. 'Heterogeneity' refers to coexistence of traditional and modern institutions, which produces mixed administrative structures and new patterns of bureaucratic behaviour. 'Formalism' refers to the degree of discrepancy between norms and realities, between 'the laws of the statute book' and 'the actual behaviour of the official'. 'Overlapping' is reflected by a structural duality of formally differentiated structure on the one hand, for example government offices, parliament, markets, and traditional undifferentiated structures such as family, religious bodies, castes. This approach proved useful for local administrative reform study in general and development administration as that of Nigeria in particular. This approach influenced my Chapter 2 where I had to clarify the historical, traditional, cultural, etc. differences between Nigeria and Britain as a starting point in the formulation of my theoretical design for the cross-cultural comparative study.

A combination of decision theory, communication theory, group theory and motivational theory forms the central theme of modern organisational theory. The sociological orientation to organisation theory is associated with the 'social system approach' of Parsons (1956). From this viewpoint a useful way is to consider them as social systems of interdependent parts within the broader system of society. According to Parsons' conception, all social systems must solve four basic problems: (a) adaptation - the accommodation of the system to the demands

of the environment; (b) goal achievement - the defining of objectives and the mobilisation of resources to attain them; (c) integration - establishing and organising a set of relations among the member units of the system that serve to unify them into a single entity; and (d) latency - the maintenance of the system's motivational and cultural patterns. Parsons views a formal organisation as a major mechanism in modern societies for mobilizing power in the interest of achieving collective objectives. However, each formal organisation is also a social system for its own right with sub-systems for the solution of the four basic problems mentioned above.

Argyris (1959) adopts the system concept for organisation study, examines the basic and attains an organisational equilibrium properties of social organisations and suggests that organisation models should strive toward understanding the patterning of all the relevant parts, as well as the nature of each part. He defines an organisation as a plurality of parts, each achieving specific objective(s); maintaining itself through interrelatedness with the other parts; simultaneously adapting to the external environment; and maintaining thereby the inter-related state on the parts.

An amalgam of these approaches provides me with the following conceptual framework for my analysis of local government reform in Britain and Nigeria:

- a) Local government administration is a sub-system of the society in general, and the political system in particular. It and its reform are constantly affected by its ecology and it in turn reacts;
- b) in Nigeria, the borderline between local government and other sub-systems is ill-defined, not being clearly established by formal legal norms or by shared conventions;
- c) local administrative system consists of interdependent parts with interacting patterns. These parts include political leadership, organisation members, formal organisation, informal work-groups and

finally, the environmental systems which have a direct impact upon local government. The most influential among environmental systems are the political system which consists of the decision-making body, political parties and interest groups, the public at large and to some extent the judiciary, the social system, the economic system and the culture at large;

d) local government is integrated into the whole system through various processes, such as the public policy making process, the communication process, and built-in equilibrium mechanisms which exist in every organisation. Local government strives to attain a balance among the various forces, political, organisational and personal, operating within and upon it;

e) local government has in-puts and out-puts across its boundary, as well as a feedback pattern. It takes in political and public demands and supports, and produces authoritative policies, administrative actions, and public services (Easton, 1961). The feedback pattern is a self moderating mechanism acting by transmission of information between local government and the environment. The information obtained by the feedback loop enables local government to respond to political and public demands, and alters its behaviour accordingly;

f) changes in other parts of the system must go hand in hand with changes in local government system lest it becomes maladjusted. Discrepancy between the whole and the part leads to defects which must be rectified by administrative reform;

g) local government reform affects the formal organisation, work-patterns and standard procedure, status positions, interpersonal and group relationships, behaviour patterns, as well as the administrative process, public policy making, co-ordination, control, communications, etc.;

h) the process of reorganisation must be integrated with mobilisation

of political and public support and with gaining acceptance of the local government officials and officers. The planning process involves political and psychological aspects, as well as administrative aspects; and

i) reform is a continuous process as internal and/or external circumstances change. Local government therefore has to be reviewed constantly, modified and readjusted to new developments.

This thesis is divided into ten chapters. In Chapter 1, I give some of the advantages which will be derived from a comparative study of this nature. I then go on to a literature review of administrative reform theories. Administrative reform is a continuous activity, a process, and I have treated the local government reforms in Nigeria and Britain in sequential trends. The first stage in the sequence is 'Diagnosis' or 'Aware of the need for Reform'. The second is 'Formulation of Objectives and Strategies of Administrative Reform'. The third and fourth stages are 'Implementation' and 'Evaluation' respectively. I concluded the chapter by formulating a number of hypothetical questions which were tested in the body of the thesis, such as : Was local government reform necessary in Nigeria and Britain because unchanging social values could no longer be realised through an outdated administrative system? Or had values changed so that reform was needed? That is, was administrative reform necessary because the administration could not keep abreast of development? Can a developing country (Nigeria) and a developed one (Britain) have similar reform objectives and strategies? How valid is the assertion that there can be no reform strategy with universal applicability? How true is Lee's hypothesis that time and leadership are two crucial variables in reform implementation? Is it true that the greater the comprehensiveness, complexity, and magnitude of changes, the lesser the probability of implementation? How objective can an evaluation of a reform be? Must we base our

evaluation on the reformer's goal or the people's feelings and attitudes? That is, whose definition of 'success' should we accept? Do the end products of the reforms contribute to the stated goals such as democracy, efficiency, national stability and economic development? Did the reformers stick to the reform objectives?

Before going into the aforementioned sequential treatment of local administrative reform, however, I give a brief historical background of local government in both countries in Chapter 2. I am comparing two administrative systems which are separated from each other by history, tradition, culture, peoples, socio-economic and political environment, among other things. Clarification of these issues is a necessary starting point in a cross-cultural comparative study. Thus in order to understand the changing structure of local government in Nigeria and Britain, and the origins of their ailments and criticism, it was pertinent to give a brief historical description of local government in both countries.

My line of argument is that a number of changes - social, economic, technological and political - had taken place in both countries since the beginning of this century and especially since the Second World War while the structure of local government had remained relatively static. I believe that because there was no corresponding change in the structure, local government in both countries became maladjusted and obsolete. Chapters 3 and 4 detail these changes which include the following: increase in population and urbanisation; growth in size and type of clientele served by local government; changes in problems, needs and demands of the people; new technology, new equipment and advancing knowledge; advances in medicine; expansion of educational facilities and changing and usually rising qualifications of personnel; increased local government functions; the growth of communications; the franchise; increased centralisation; the intrusion of party politics

in local government; and the rise of the professional officer in local government.

These changes, I argue in the thesis, were responsible for the criticisms and 'defects' of local government in Nigeria and Britain. Chapter 5 catalogues the views of critics who believe that the boundary problem formed the mediety of local government defects while other problems as those pertaining to democracy, efficiency, central control and councillor calibre arose mainly because of the defective structure. For the sake of my analysis, I reduce the defects which were identified by the Royal Commission on Local Government Reform in England 1966-69 and the Federal Government of Nigeria to four broad ones. First, there were too many too small authorities, lacking the areas, population and resources to provide the specialised staff, equipment and institutions needed by increasingly technical and complex services, and catchment areas were too small to provide the necessary standards of service to the growing numbers of minority groups needing public help. In northern Nigeria, however, it was felt that the native authorities were too big and therefore remote, undemocratic and 'ungovernable'. Secondly, the existing areas of local government did not fit the facts of social life. The obsolete division of town and country took no account of their interdependency and in particular the division between county boroughs and counties 'builds into the system a division of interest where, in fact, there is a common interest'. Thirdly, it was believed that this fragmentation meant that the citizens did not feel that local government units reflected anything meaningful in their daily lives. Local government areas did not correspond to what they regarded as communities. And so they grew apathetic. Fourthly, the division of local government into competing authorities, unable to combine in a common front, and their inadequate areas (except in northern Nigeria), meant that the central government was



increasing its control, and was likely to remove more functions from unreformed local government, leaving it with few important activities and increasingly unattractive to able people, either officials or members, to serve. This relates to the calibre of councillors and the local government staff. The low calibre of course meant that the authorities were ineffective and inefficient. These problems were said to be compounded by party politics and corruption, especially in Nigeria. It should be noted that the views of critics are just presented in this Chapter and I do not superimpose my views on theirs (my views are analysed in Chapter 8) except in a few cases where the paucity of critical materials on Nigeria leads me to supplement what was available with my own experiences and empirical findings.

In Chapter 6, I crystallise the 1974 reform objectives in Britain and those of the 1976 reform in Nigeria into three main goals: Functions and Size, Democracy, and Efficiency. In Nigeria, however, the objectives included national stability and socio-economic development. I also discuss the main differences in the strategies of both countries to local government reform.

The implementation of these reform objectives are outlined in Chapter 7. In Chapter 8 I evaluate the whole process of local government reform in Nigeria and Britain. I also try to answer the hypothetical questions I set myself in Chapter 1 and at the same time present my views on some of the assertions generally made by critics and theorists.

In Chapter 9 I not only present a number of general recommendations which should help in the attainment of reform objectives in any future reform efforts, but I also try to expound my own hypothesis which I believe would enhance participation in local affairs and help to reduce local government burden. Furthermore, my own propositions should give the ordinary people practical experience

of self-reliance and their ability to create their own solutions to the problems they face. All these advantages and many more which I identified in Chapter 9 can be achieved through the concept of community development either by creating community councils or neighbourhood councils in Britain, or by integrating the age-set institution into the system of local government in Nigeria. And I suggest that the creation of growth pole centres would enhance the efficiency of such an integration of our traditional institution of age-set and the modern quintessence of local government. My propositions may seem bold, broad and may be even vulnerable, but they are nonetheless valuable. Public administration is a science which must always be open to suggestions which may be productive of knowledge. Scientists speculate and guess, they are intuitive, all of which is part of the 'context of discovery'. After all, wisdom does not come to him who gapes at nature with an empty head.

Finally, in the 'Conclusion', I summarise some of the themes which I have developed in the preceding chapters, elucidate further some of the answers to the hypothetical questions in Chapter 1, and suggest ideas which I feel need to be developed if we are to progress in our understanding of local government reform.

## CHAPTER ONE

COMPARATIVE PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND THE  
THEORY OF ADMINISTRATIVE REFORM

## INTRODUCTION

What then are the methods of the social sciences? All the various methods employed may be grouped under one term: COMPARISON. The single fact means nothing to us; we accumulate facts that seem akin; we classify and reclassify them; discarding superficial and accidental similarities as we discover deeper substantial identities. We accumulate and compare facts from our own and from foreign countries; we accumulate facts from the immediate and more remote past, and compare them with each other and with present facts. Statistics, comparative legislation, history - these are means and models of accumulating facts for comparison... Of all these auxiliary sciences, the most important is history. All other methods of comparative study may be said to operate on a single plane - the plane of the present. History gives to the Social Sciences the third dimension and thus indefinitely increases the range of comparison. But it does far more than this. To the application of the historical method we owe the discovery that social institutions persist and at the same time change from generation to generation and from century to century (Smith, 1886, pp.4-5).

The purpose of this chapter is twofold: without raising the general questions involved in comparative public administration, such as its evolution, we shall first outline some of the advantages of cross-national comparative analysis. It is only through cross-national comparison that we can penetrate the many ambiguities and confusions in the theoretical writing about local government reform. A comparison illuminates aspects of each system. After all, it is interesting to know not only what a system is, but also what it is not, and why it is not. Secondly, we will give a detailed analysis of the theory of administrative reform. This is important not only because it will enable us to measure the success or failure of

local government reforms in Britain and Nigeria, but also we will be able to determine how far both countries have conformed (or deviated) from the theory of administrative reform process in their local government reorganizations. Furthermore, we will be in a position to test the universal applicability or otherwise of the theory of reform. That is, does the theory of administrative reform apply equally to a developed country like Britain and a developing country like Nigeria? This will help us to explore some of the limitations of our 'taken-for-granted knowledge' about local government reform.

#### SIGNIFICANCE OF COMPARATIVE STUDIES

Without going into the general advantages of comparative studies, we can say, for our purposes here, that a comparative analysis can make a major contribution towards an improved understanding of the way in which different countries' institutions of public administration actually work. Such studies can also lead to a better understanding of the workings of public administration in one's own country. That is, in order that reasons peculiar to one country are not simply presented as the course of particular administrative activities, some elements of comparison are necessary to explain the situation. 'To know thyself, compare thyself to others'. The comparative approach is an eye-opener to a people's self-recognition and to its taking a stand. It is not accidental that great civilizations, like the Renaissance, were developed at the crossroads of mankind and articulated by the meeting of contrasting systems. This encounter alone made an awakening Western Europe fully aware of her own character and qualities. It is therefore significant

that the study of public administration must become a much more broadly based discipline, resting not on a narrowly defined knowledge of techniques and processes, but rather extending to the varying historical, sociological, economic and other conditioning factors that give public administration its peculiar stamp in each country (Dahl, 1947,p.11.).

Furthermore, comparative public administration studies can be seen as having a political application for the improvement and extension of the machinery of government in a particular country. That is, public servants are interested in the way in which foreign countries deal with the structure and content of administration and with administrative reform. Foreign experience can contribute some ideas to solve the administrative problems of one's country. Politics has changed from an almost static preservation of carefully balanced positions to the interplay of dynamic drives of unpredictable forces. Hence our concern has turned away from a merely descriptive analysis of formal, legalistic, and constitutional forms to a prime consideration of the processes of decision-making and political dynamics especially administrative reform. Thus we stand to make an invaluable gain in a comparative study of local government reform in Nigeria and Britain.

Local government in Nigeria and Britain, for instance, are providers of services. They are also democratic agencies for the ordering of local priorities and the implementation of local demands. Both are essential mechanisms for relieving overloaded central government of some of the many services it is expected to provide. They help to legitimise decisions made at central level. Furthermore, they are massive spenders: in Britain, for example, between 1962 and 1974, local government expenditure rose from 9.2 per cent to

12.4 per cent of the gross domestic product. In Nigeria, local government authorities spend 7 per cent of the nationally derived public revenue. Lastly, they are recruiting agencies for the local political elites.

Local government systems in both countries also share a number of problems. They are faced with erosion of autonomy: increasing State intervention, and the growth of national planning objectives and agencies. Another major problem of both systems concerns efficiency. Finally, they share the problem of democracy at the local level, that is, representativity of the local elites, and participation.

Both systems have their differences which are rooted in the social environment, in the historical traditions and conventions which underpin each system, in the political and economic setting, and in the institutional arrangements of each country. Despite these differences and similarities, both countries have been obsessed with the need to reform local government.

## THE THEORY OF ADMINISTRATIVE REFORM

### Introduction

Administrative reform is a universal thing, and in contrast to 'change', it is man-made and deliberate. Goodenough rightly observed that "as long as humanity lasts, men will be reformers... endeavouring to change others in order to maintain or create desired situations for themselves, or to change themselves in order to accommodate to unyielding circumstances or to realise a new dream" (1963, p.15 ). Politicians, civil servants and scholars of public

administration have always expressed their concern about the inadequate adaptation of the machinery of government to societal and political needs. Administrative reform, which is the panacea to this 'inadequate adaptation', may take the form of a piecemeal reorganization within an arm of the administrative machinery, designed to adjust the relationships between a bureaucracy and other elements in a society or within the bureaucracy itself, or a large-scale overhaul of the system in-toto. As administrative systems change slowly and in a conservatively incremental manner, natural response and adaptation are inadequate in meeting the challenge of development. Something faster and more radical is needed, namely, organized programmes of administrative reform.

But the term, 'administrative reform', has been much used and abused. Writers on administrative reform have failed to reach a consensus on its definition and on a theoretical framework under which it can be studied and analysed. It is still at a pre-paradigmatic stage "marked by a plethora of competing schools, a polyglot of languages, and accordingly, a confusion of logics. There is neither a common research tradition nor the necessary consensus for a common field of inquiry. Each of the competing schools questions the others, adventurism is rampant, and commonly accepted standards of control do not exist" (Landau, 1966,p.39). And recently, questions have been asked as to the adequacy and appropriateness of the term 'administrative reform' itself and suggestions have been offered to substitute it by using a more comprehensive term like 'reorganization of the machinery of government' which is "a consciously induced and directed change in

the machinery of government" (Leemans, 1976,p.8).

The study of administrative reform, like other social science subjects, is handicapped by what Leemans calls 'a jungle of concepts and terminology':

Not only do students in the same field have difficulty in communicating with each other, but laymen cannot understand the reservations academics have about each other's work and they are puzzled by the different uses of the same term in referring to vaguely related phenomena. The lack of a universally shared and standardized vocabulary is common to all social sciences, with the same consequence - namely that semantic confusion leads to errors of a theoretical and explanatory nature (Caiden, 1970, pp.43-4).

The dissatisfaction and frustrations that have developed over the years about the use of the term 'administrative reform' can be attributed to several factors. One of the rhetorics that is often heard in any reform effort is the 'rationality concept': that administrative reform is intended to improve upon the existing situation by aiming to create a good administration which clearly has a normative element. Contrary to these pious wishes, what actually happens in many real situations is entirely a different thing. Many reformers have no other purpose than to strengthen the position of certain power holders, and reform actors are strongly inspired by influence and power motives (Leemans, 1976, p.8). The traditional use of the term has left an impression that a clear-cut distinction can be made between changes in the bureaucracy and those in the organization of the political executive organs. As one writer aptly says, "it may well be that administrative reform has lost its grip on the imagination of the political scientists because it has ignored the conceptual



problems involved in adapting static models of administrative perfection to dynamic political reality" (Montgomery, 1969,p.427).

A good number of the so-called administrative reforms have implied considerable changes in the structure and processes of political executive organs and in their relationship with the administrative machinery (Leemans, 1976, p.7). It has been observed that changes in power structures within and among political executive organs induce changes in the administrative machinery, many of which are inspired by purely political considerations (Groves, 1976, pp.99-113).

Recent discussions show considerable awareness of the need to view administrative reform as a sub-system of a wider societal system which includes a political sub-system. Administrative reform is part of societal reform, and the interactions between and among the administrative and political sub-systems are crucial and to a large extent determine the setting up of objectives, strategies, and probabilities of the success of the implementation of the administrative reform proposals. Part II of Leeman's The Management of Change in Government is a catalogue of case studies about administrative reform, and the experiences of some developing countries point to a dilemma which has not been adequately treated (see Moharir, 1976, pp.238-51; Hadisumarto and Siegel, 1976, pp.252-71; Castro, 1976, pp.185-212; Brewar-Carias, 1976,pp.213-237). On the one hand, there is a growing need to undertake comprehensive reform programmes to keep in pace with complex social, economic and political situations which most developing countries must cope with in order to survive let alone prosper. On the other hand, comprehensive reforms have been found to be extremely difficult to

implement.

Another factor which has obstructed the formulation of a theoretical framework with universal usage is the place of contextuality in the success or failure of any reform. Developing countries differ vastly among themselves regarding their administrative systems (that is, nature, composition, and capability), political systems (that is, absolute monarchy, military rule, dictatorship, one-party rule, multi-party democratic system), economic conditions (that is, stages of economic development), and cultural heritage. These wide-ranging differences, and, consequently, the futile attempts to develop an all-embracing and universal strategy to study administrative systems and reforms have been widely recognised. Lawrence and Lorsch (1969,p.88) conclude that an optimal change model for a particular case should be "conditional on the task to be done, the environmental conditions to be handled, and the characteristics of the individual contributors involved"(emphasis mine).

In fact Basil and Cook opine that a "categorization of environmental states is a prerequisite to developing strategies for change" (1974, p.205). Dror hypothesizes that "the preferable mix of administrative reform strategies is in the main a function of the concrete circumstances of each particular reform" (1976,p.127). Cohen emphasizes the uniqueness of each situation, which results in the demand by each to use its own approach suited to the particular situation at hand and builds strategic models on the basis of three variables; task, organizational form, and personal characteristics (1976, pp.165-181). Esman (1972), in his authoritative analysis of administrative reform in Malaysia, agrees with the view that each situation requires its own strategy.

The simple fact, however, that there seems to be no strategies of universal applicability does not exclude the design of strategic model for the management of induced change in government which have some degree of validity for similar reform situations and objects. Cohen (1976, pp.165-181), Lee (1976, pp.114-125), and Lawrence and Lorsch (1969, p.89) provide typologies which suggest that a broad model of reform strategy can be designed to study divergent types of reform situations.

#### What is Administrative Reform?

We stated at the beginning that there has been no corpus of systematic theory either about the kind of administrative changes which should be engineered or about the methods by which they should be implemented. Thus administrative reform, as a term, has been defined differently by different writers depending on their focus of attention. Thinking on administrative reform can be traced during the post-war years when systematic efforts were made to export technical help and know-how to the developing countries from the developed ones especially the United States in order to strengthen the administrative capabilities of the former, but intellectual discussion did not become very important until the sixties. In spite of the growing attention in recent years, administrative reform still remains conceptually deficient and elusive. This can be attributed partially to the inability of the people writing on it to differentiate the term from other related terms. The theorists, in order to look creative, spend a lot of time trying to disprove other theorists, while devoting little time to producing fine academic theories. Moreover the mass of 'bad' theories threatens

the recognition of 'good' theories. Landau (1965, pp.7-8) warns that metaphorical schèmes

can neither be justified nor invalidated and they remain outside the scientific domain quite impregnable to the tests of experience. Such transfers not only cluster our vocabularies but they are pregnant sources of myth.....

He further warns against "the mixing of models which not only obscures imagery and confuses meaning but....frequently leads to contradictory results" and may lead to nonsense results as well as erroneous conclusions.

Furthermore, Caiden says that the over-abundance of theories is due to pride and independence. "Independence creates a random approach to common problems, with a resulting reluctance to follow somebody else's definitions and usages. The semantic confusion produces a mass of terminologies that pass as new theories" (Caiden, 1970, p.3.).

It is evident that the term 'administrative reform' has acquired widespread usage and recognition in the literature pertaining to government and public administration. The rationality concept or moral purpose of administrative reform has been emphasized. Thus the term has been applied to all improvements in administration:

- (a) to general administrative overhauls in difficult situations,
- (b) to specific remedies for 'maladministration', (c) to any suggestion for better government, and (d) even to the intentions of self-styled administrative reformers (see, for example, Finan and Dean, 1957, pp.437-452; Siegel, 1966, pp.45-55; Singh, 1955, pp.224-239; Martin, 1965). For instance, Montgomery defines administrative reform as "a political process designed to adjust the

relationship between a bureaucracy and other elements in a society, or within the bureaucracy itself....both the purposes of reforms and the evils addressed vary with their political circumstances" (Montgomery, 1967, p.1.). Caiden defines it as "the artificial inducement of administrative transformation against resistance" (Caiden, 1970, p.8.). According to him, administrative reform contains three interrelated properties: (a) moral purpose, which emphasizes the importance and necessity of improving the status quo by removing alleged faults; (b) artificial transformation which points to a radical departure from existing arrangements and policies. 'It is a form of creative destruction in that an old order is broken down to pave the way for a new order'; and (c) administrative resistance, that is, when opposition is assumed (Caiden, 1970, pp.66-7).

Caiden (1970, pp.57-8, 65-7) also distinguishes administrative reform from administrative change by saying that the latter is a self-adjusting organizational response to fluctuating conditions while the need for the former arises from the latter because of the malfunctioning of the natural processes of administrative change.

Dror says that administrative reform is "directed change of the main features of an administrative system" (1976,p.127). This definition gives the term an objective reference and an ordinal scale of measurement. His two principal attributes of reform are goal orientation (directed, conscious) and the comprehensiveness of change, so that reform can be considered in terms of its scope (number of administrative components affected) and the rate of change (time required to bring about the desired changes). To Hahn-Been Lee,

administrative reform is a complex process in which many factors interact and affect one another and whose results can be found over a considerable period of time (Lee, 1970, pp.77-89). Lee broadens his ideas about administrative reform and proceeds to show its link with innovation by declaring that administrative reform involves new values and modes of behaviour to accommodate new ideas within an organizational context. This is what Leemans (1976,p.8) calls its latent apostolic nature. Administrative reform is therefore considered normative as it calls for improvement upon the existing order. "And there is little question that national development is the primary goal of many developing countries" (emphasis mine) (Lee,1976,p.114).

Administrative reform is generally used to describe activities which actually go far beyond its salient meaning. It is conceived as directed action. Administrative reform is defined here as those efforts which call for or lead to major changes in the bureaucratic system of a country intended to transform the existing and established practices, structures and behaviours within it.

To a number of scholars, the terms administrative development and administrative reorganization are synonymous with administrative reform. This is not surprising as reorganization literally means organizing some things differently from what was the case in the past. Reform has literal origins in the giving of new and different form to something, and translating those terms in organization vocabulary signifies new organizational structure. As Mosher notes,

Reform has a strong normative connotation. Reorganization though somewhat restricted and precise in its definition, has come to acquire nearly the same meaning in the American culture, both in its descriptive and in its normative senses (Mosher,1965,p.129).

Reorganization, therefore, is conscious, planned, intended, deliberate attempt to change the existing state of the system (Mosher, 1967, p.497).

Khan defines administrative development as the growing capability of the administrative system to cope continuously with difficulties created by social change toward the goal of achieving socio-economic and political progress (Khan, 1975, p.149). To Riggs (1971, pp.25-6), administrative development reflects the capacity of administrative systems to make choices and to exercise discretion to bring about environmental changes by deliberate programmes and self-conscious decisions.

The objective of any reform effort and administrative development programme is to bring a change in the present state of the administrative system which will enhance its capacity to undertake and perform complex functions as they emerge. In a nutshell, it is agreed that it is through administrative reform that we can achieve greater administrative development:

First, reform proposals challenge bureaucratic inertia and reactionary administrators and although defence mechanisms may temporarily suppress change, things can never quite be the same and peace tokens have to be made if the situation is to be kept in hand. Second, reform programmes attract enterprising administrative talent and provide valuable experience for a new generation of administrative aspirants. Third, reformers promote badly needed administrative modernization which is likely to set off a chain reaction in functional reforms as changes in techniques, skills, and attributes in specialized field seem more attainable than possibly the harder changes to carry through in administration. Fourth, constructive progressive forces find openings for their respective creative talent in empirical problem-solving, particularly the kind presented in administrative reform. Fifth, any effort to transform administrative systems is to be commended in the face of official indifference, technical ignorance, political intransigence and public apathy (Caiden, 1973, p.343).

For our purposes in this thesis, we define administrative reform as those efforts which call for or lead to major changes in the

bureaucratic system of a country intended to transform the existing and established practices, structures and behaviours within it. This definition helps us to distinguish the post-war 'tinkering changes' from the major reforms of 1974 and 1976 in Britain and Nigeria respectively.

#### Administrative Reform as a Process

Administrative reform is a continuous activity, a process, and we shall therefore study it in its sequential trend. Any study of administrative reform must begin with the understanding of the awareness of the need for reform and conclude with a discussion of the problems relating to the implementation of such efforts, that is, an evaluation of the implementation of reform objectives, as in Figure 1.1:

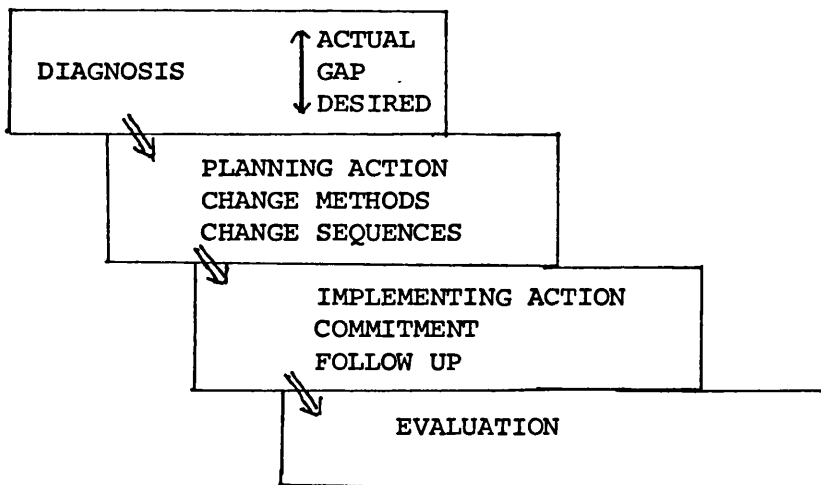


Figure 1.1: Source: Lawrence and Lorsch, 1969,p.89

Several advantages can be noted if administrative reform is considered a process. Reform is a process which carries with it



wider implications than the content of the reform. In other words, behavioural aspects are emphasized along with the structural ones to make a study of any administrative reform more exhaustive. Cohen emphasizes the role of the reformer in the process approach. In reform, the medium is the message:

- (a) the way the reformer goes about making changes is at least as important as the specific changes recommended;
- (b) if a reformer wants to create more responsible, responsive and initiating civil servants, the reformer himself must begin immediately to behave that way. A splendid example of the physician healing himself - risk-taking and innovation beginning with the reformer right from the start of the reform movement;
- (c) since reform is a process, the relationship between reformer and target becomes a central issue, not only for the initial structuring of the relationship, but also for the way in which the reformer goes about studying the problem, gathering information, coming to conclusions and making recommendations. The reformer must not only arrive at good answers, but must work in a way that is consistent with the desired changes (Cohen, 1976, pp.172-3). A process-oriented approach takes into account and gives high priority to the human variable in the reform. At the same time, it demands that reformers must be more knowledgeable, concerned and involved to bring about the relevant changes.

Caiden disagrees with the notion that process approach is most suitable to study administrative reform. Instead, he opts for a systems approach because he believes that "reform of any administrative

system should begin with an analysis of the system rather than an analysis of the reform process" (Caiden, 1973a, p.27). Caiden thinks that the process approach is too narrow in its scope and in the end is unable to consider sources and dynamics of administrative behaviour within the context of an administrative system. Contrary to Caiden's thinking, it can be argued that the process approach is comprehensive in its scope and does include and focus on the interaction between and among individuals and organizations and thereby throws light on the dynamics of administrative behaviour.

Goodenough identifies six major stages in the process of administrative reform:

- (a) INSPIRATION, the initial reformulation of the new social order, which usually comes to some individual in a flash of insight into social and moral problems;
- (b) COMMUNICATION, whereby the visionary reveals his ideas to others and seeks their co-operation;
- (c) ORGANIZATION of converts, through which the prophet reaches a wider audience;
- (d) ADAPTATION TO RESISTANCE, wherein "even mild disapproval or lack of enthusiasm is likely to be interpreted as evidence of hostility toward the movement and its aims";
- (e) ENACTING a programme, in which concrete steps are taken systematically to alter the conditions of life, and to forge a new order; and
- (f) ROUTINIZATION, when the programme and its results are successful and the new pattern of living becomes routine (Goodenough, 1963, p.286).

Mosher (1965, pp. 142-6), following Goodenough, identifies

six sequential steps also:

- (a) INCREASE OF TENSION, when within the administration, dissatisfaction and frustration intensify;
- (b) SPARK, when some particular event ignites the already charged atmosphere;
- (c) REORGANIZATION STUDIES carried out by investigatory groups about what should be done;
- (d) THE REACHING OF DECISION, 'the consultation, negotiating, and decision phase', which may coincide with the previous stage or await feasibility studies;
- (e) FEASIBILITY STUDIES, which consists of translating recommendations into practical administrative techniques and planning implementation; and
- (f) IMPLEMENTATION.

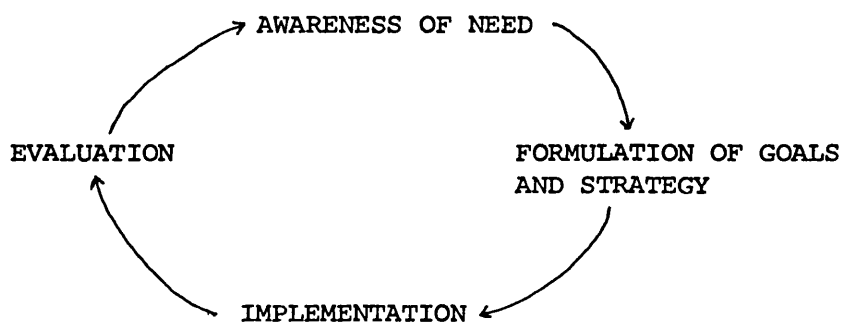
For our purpose here, the six major sequential steps in administrative reform identified by Goodenough and Mosher will be combined and reduced to four broad phases:

- (a) Awareness of need or diagnosis;
- (b) Formulation of goals and objectives, Strategy and Tactics or Planning Action;
- (c) Implementation of reforms or Implementing Action; and
- (d) Evaluation.

Each of these steps is characterized by the need for top-level decisions and adequate resources for its fulfilment. The initial decision to make a global diagnosis is not enough. For this diagnosis to serve as the basis for a programme of action, it must be followed by a further decision fixing priorities on the basis of the needs considered most

urgent by the reformers. In some cases, this decision will permit the instrumentation of the infrastructure for reform mechanisms, but new and specific decisions are required in order to implement the recommendations formulated by such mechanisms. Each step changes the preceding situation, and constitutes definite progress that calls in turn for new decisions. What is called for is actually a chain of decisions as in Figures 1.2 and 1.3

Figure 1.2



#### AWARENESS OF THE NEED FOR ADMINISTRATIVE REFORM

According to Lawrence and Lorsch, a diagnosis should indicate the symptoms which have to be translated into a "coherent picture on the basis of which action can be planned and carried out with a reasonable assurance that objectives will be achieved" (Lawrence and Lorsch, 1969, p.85). Thus administrative reform is needed where change is insufficient to keep an administration abreast of development, and performance gaps appear - that is, "a significant discrepancy exists between what it is doing and what it 'ought' to be doing" (Downs, 1967, p.191). The conditions which necessitate administrative

# THE ADMINISTRATIVE REFORM PROCESS

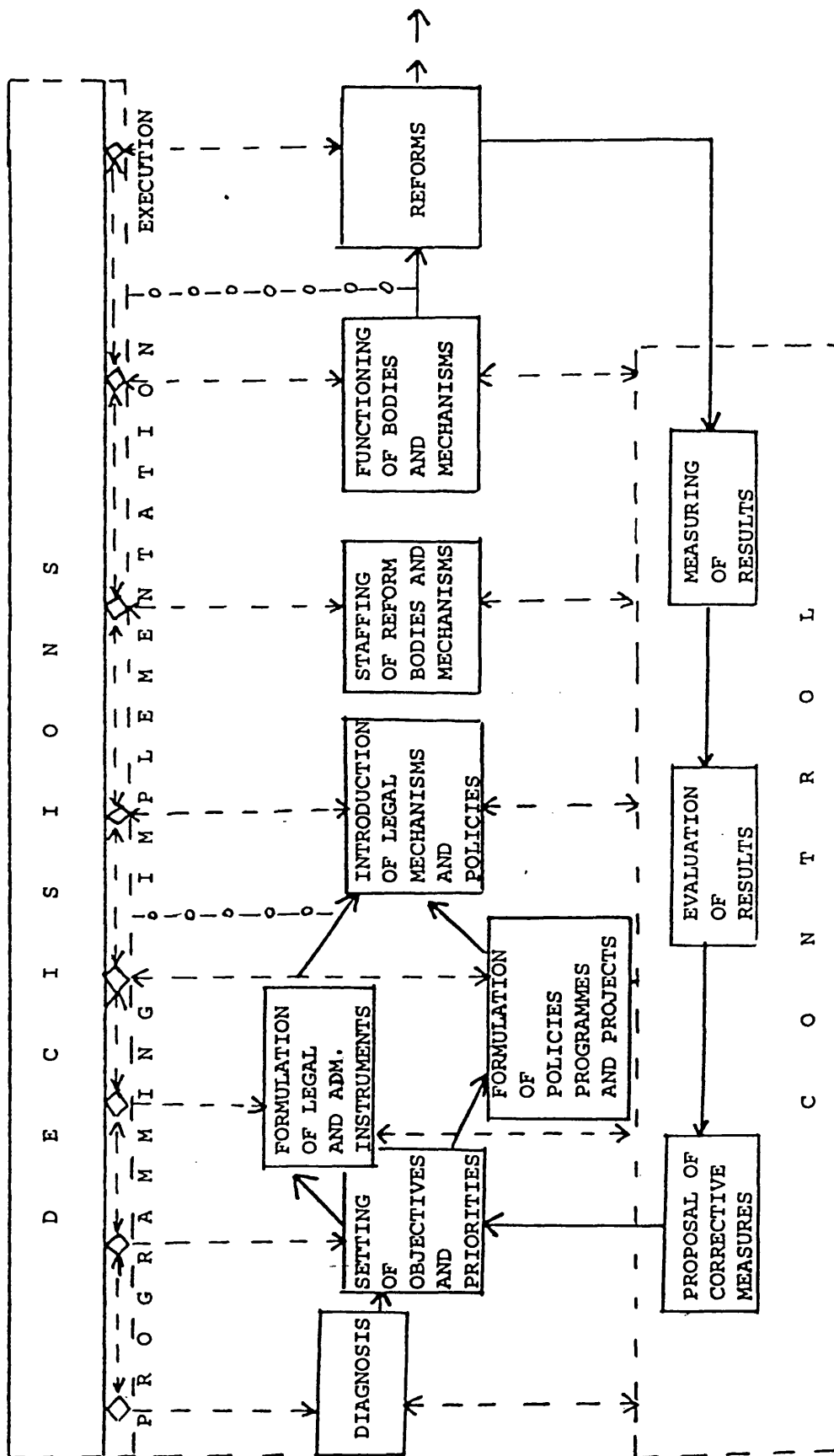


FIGURE 1.3:

Source: Castro, 1976, p.192

FIGURE 1.3:

reform are the following:

- (a) The take-over of power through revolution or otherwise, by political groups who differ strongly from those previously in office;
- (b) (Semi-) revolutionary developments inspired by violent dissatisfaction with the operations of the machinery of government including the bureaucracy;
- (c) Grave developments in the environment such as war (or threat of war), economic depression, sharp demands which have strong political support (for example, for the autonomy of parts of the country);
- (d) The need for drastic cuts in government expenditure;
- (e) 'Maladministration' which does not clearly affect the relationship with the environment but is perceived as excessive annoyance by groups within the government (Leemans, 1976, pp.16-17). Thus, the awareness of administrative reform arises when the components of an administrative system become maladjusted.

Combination of a number of different and identifiable factors over a period of time will push for major structural and behavioural changes to rectify the defects in the existing administrative system. These are:

Growth in the size of the clientele served; changes in problems and needs and, therefore, in organizational programmes and responsibilities; changing philosophy as to the proper responsibilities of governments; (result of) new equipment and advancing knowledge; changing and usually rising qualifications of personnel (that is, increasing need for specialists); basic policy changes at top level forces change (Mosher, 1967, pp.494-96).

This phase (Diagnosis) not only calls for an analysis and diagnosis

of the administrative situation but also the selection and indication by authorities of administrative reform of priorities within this framework; and the determination of means (normative instruments and bodies responsible for orientation, co-ordination, execution and evaluation of reforms) and measures (policies, programme and projects) with which to achieve the chosen objectives.

#### FORMULATION OF OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES OF ADMINISTRATIVE REFORM

Although administrative reform is universal, it is conditioned by a number of variables: specific local needs, availability of different resources, historic traditions and indigenous political culture. Before we can say that a reform is a success or otherwise, it is therefore necessary not only to consider these variables, but also we must clarify the aggregate goals of the administrative reform. When the awareness for reform is clearly felt and understood, the logical step that follows is to decide what needs to be done and how that can be accomplished. No reform process can be complete without a clear perception of the role of goals and strategies within it. There is a clear consensus among practitioners and academicians that desired goals for any administrative reform must be set as clearly and as early as possible. It is essential in order to determine the appropriate strategies. Also, without specification of goals, it will not be possible to determine the extent of success or failure of the reform.

Dror (1976, pp.129-130) mentions six paramount goal clusters that inform reforms:

- (a) Traditional 'administrative efficiency' in the sense of saving money through form simplification, procedure change, duplication reduction and through similar organization and methods approaches;
- (b) changing a particular main component of the administrative system so as to meet some ideal image. This again includes a large variety of main goals such as: introduction of a merit civil service; introduction of a planning-programming-budgetting system; moving towards automated data processing and integrated data and information banks;
- (c) reduction of perceived weaknesses, such as corruption, favouritism, political spoils etc;
- (d) adjusting the administrative system to advancing over-riding societal objectives, such as accelerated modernization;
- (e) changing the division of labour (functions) between the administrative system and the political system. For instance, either in the direction of reducing the power of the senior civil service and making it a more obedient servant of the political process or increasing the professional autonomy of the administrative system and strengthening its influence on policy;
- (f) changing the relations between the administrative system and the population or selected population segments. For instance, through relocation of decision centres ('centralization versus decentralization'), 'democratization' in the sense of participation, and 'democratization' in the sense of making the personnel composition more reflective of various population segments. Of course administrative reform can be for purely political motives, such as making administration serve as a scapegoat, gaining support through distributing spoils.

Dror rightly says that administrative reform is a multi-goal-oriented endeavour which necessitates categorization of objectives.



Objectives can be divided into external and internal categories.

This typology has the advantage of indicating the nature of the reform suggested. Dror, following the same line of thinking, distinguishes between the two principal categories: (a) "intra-administration directed goals which are primarily concerned with improving the administration, and (b) objectives dealing with the societal roles of the administrative system and its interrelation with other components of the policymaking system and even of society as a whole" (Dror, 1976, p.130). Goal clusters, a, b, and c above are examples of goals which are intra-administration directed, while d, e and f are examples of administrative reform goals dealing with the societal roles of the administrative system, and with changing policies and programmes.

In many circumstances, internal and external goals remain closely interrelated and pose problems to efforts which intend to differentiate between them (see, for example, Mosher, 1967, p.497). The former are usually set as means towards the greater attainment of external goals, that is, to realise certain societal situations or relationships, or to increase and improve outputs. External goals have been specified in general terms in administrative reform programmes in many countries. These mostly concern the overhauling of the administrative system to accelerate wide-ranging social and economic development. At the same time, political realities must be taken into consideration in setting objectives. Internal objectives have been associated with the attainment of economy, efficiency, and effectiveness within an organizational context. Reduction of unnecessary governmental expenditure on trivial administrative activities has been another objective of administrative reform. All these are intended to bring about significant improvements in administrative systems.

Experience has shown that there is a lot of difference between formal or official goals and informal and individual goals of particular

reformers which sometimes may be not only dissimilar but contradictory. Commenting on the Philippine experiences in administrative reform, Dr. Josef Abueva charges that undeclared goals of reformers were personal advancement, empire-building, and elimination of rivals (Abueva, 1970, pp. 45-47). Caiden therefore draws some conclusions from the range of objectives and goals: (a) Reform objectives are not necessarily objective and reform proposals are not necessarily subjective; (b) complex radical reforms need more time and instruction to implement than simpler incremental reforms; (c) initial steps in reform implementation are judged more critically than later stages, once expectations and promises seem to be in the process of realisation; (d) reforms are more likely to be accepted (1) if they are tailored to local circumstances, implemented through existing institutions, and invite local participation (emphasis mine); (2) if existing institutions and practices are not condemned out of hand, that is, if attention is given to extolling the virtues of reform rather than the defects of the unreformed; and (3) if they are based on critical rather than uncritical nonoperationalism; (e) it is easier to draft proposals and plans than to execute them. The wider the range of reform sources the more likely that the proposals will not coincide (Caiden, 1970, pp. 142-3).

### Strategy

According to the United Nations Report, "the frequency with which administrative reform efforts had failed in the past demonstrated the difficulty of making them effective without good reform strategies and the importance of devising appropriate strategies to carry them out" (United Nations, 1973, Vol. 1, p. 13). Strategy is one of those

elements in the process of administrative reform whose significance is well recognized, but at the same time little effort has been made until recently to circumscribe it (see Chin and Benne, 1969, pp.32-59). This problem is complicated by the 'elusiveness' of the concept, because different reformers use different strategies. No two persons have similar thoughts, experience, knowledge and values about what strategy to employ for administrative reform. Though they examine identical social phenomenon, they view it differently:

People will define the meaning of a situation differently, they will come up with different evaluations, they will derive or impute different norms and certainly they will feel about the situation in many, many different ways and intensities (Meadows, 1963, p.87).

The rejection of the validity of a universal strategy for the management of administrative reform is also emphasized by Leemans. "The place and role of the machineries and their sub-systems in the politico-administrative system and in society at large, their internal structures and relationships, their political and administrative cultures and patterns of behaviour, vary too much to allow a strategy with universal applicability" (Leemans, 1976, p.46). Similarly, Lawrence and Lorsch suggest that the desired reform model for a certain case should be conditional on the task to be done, the environmental conditions to be handled, and the characteristics of the individual contributors involved (1969, p.88). Dror hypothesises that "the preferable mix of administrative reform strategies is in the main a function of the concrete circumstances of each particular reform" (Dror, 1976, p.127).

The rejection of universal strategies should not stop us from designing strategic models for the management of administrative reform which have some degree of validity for similar reform situations and objects. Thus, Dror is one of the first scholars to undertake a thorough study of strategy in the context of administrative reform and

to provide a conceptual framework for further elaboration and clarification. He defines it as 'mega-policies' which lays down "the framework of guidelines and the boundaries of policy space within which operational and detailed policies are to be established and decisions are to be made" (Dror, 1976,p.126). Strategy implies defining the goal boundaries of a desired or intended activity, as opposed to 'tactics' which refer to details of policy programmes (Leemans,1976, p.42; see also, Mosher,1967,p.502).

In conformity with our definition, strategies in the context of local government reform must therefore deal with issues such as:

overall goals of administrative reforms; the boundaries of administrative reforms; preference in respect of time, risk, acceptability; choice between more incremental or more innovative reform; preference for more balanced versus more shock directed reforms; relevant assumptions on the future; theoretic (trait or explicit) assumptions on which the reform is based; resources available for the administrative reform; and the range of feasible reform instruments (Dror,1976,p.126).

Strategies have also been viewed from a sequential, logical angle which presupposes careful consideration of several factors which sometimes must be carried out simultaneously. These are as follows:

- (a) Research and analysis of the current situation;
- (b) analysis and discussion leading to general consensus on needs and goals;
- (c) forecasting of the future setting of public administration, including the political, economic and social environment, and the probable availability of resources to administration, as well as to its reform;
- (d) development of alternative plans of administrative reform; and analysis of their costs and benefits, including social costs and benefits;
- (e) decision to proceed on best feasible plan;
- (f) implementation;
- (g) continuing feedback on consequences and modification of plan as indicated (Grosnick and Mosher,1973,pp.11-13.).

In conclusion, we can say that the 'best' strategy for administrative reform is determined contextually, dependent on and dictated by the reform objectives, the 'human dimensions', and the special environment obtaining in a particular country; and the three most essential elements of strategy are: (a) determining the desired (provisional) situations and possible alternatives or variants; (b) determining the means by which this situation should be achieved; and (c) fixing the time dimension, that is, the period within which the desired situation should be realised (Leemans, 1976, p.46).

#### IMPLEMENTATION

Caiden (1976, p.142) calls the implementation stage the achilles heel of administrative reform because most reforms fail at this stage. Experiences of India and Pakistan are good examples (Moharir, 1976, pp.238-51; Gorvine, 1966). As all reforms entail not only structural changes but also changes in mental and moral attitudes, people normally try to resist their implementation because they "prefer the familiar to the unknown, ... the tried to the untried, fact to mystery, the actual to the possible, the limited to the unbounded, the convenient to the perfect, present laughter to utopian bliss" (Oakeshott, 1962, p.172). Moreover, any given organization which is internally integrated resists being changed and discourages changes in its context. "Survival is... the motif of any organization and stability is the sine qua non of organizational survival" (LePiere, 1954, p.329).

The age-old advice generally given to the reformer is to keep in mind the interests of politicians and various affected interests within the administrative system so as to obtain the support of these people to facilitate the implementation and success of the reforms. The blessing of political authorities and cooperation of civil servants

(those who perceive real or imaginary threats that they will be adversely affected by the reform) are invaluable to overcome the greatest hurdles to the success of any reform effort. The difficult position of the reformer in the context of reform implementation is obvious:

The reformers remain outsiders to the situation they are trying to improve. They have no power, position, status to influence those who can change things or they have no access to people who do have influence, or they have no impact on people who have to be convinced. Even highly prestigious bodies invested with the task of reform discover that nobody else really has any intention of doing anything about their proposals and they are being used to bury a burning issue, not for remedial action. When reformers do something worthwhile to propose and action is intended, they find that administrative systems are extremely conservative, no matter what the recognised value of their suggestion (Caiden, 1976, p.142).

The high attrition rate in the implementation of major administrative reforms has been considered as one of the most complex and frustrating problems faced by the scholars in the area. In response to the situation, two things have happened. On the one hand, deliberate attempts have been made to identify and analyse those factors and situations which prevent the implementation of reforms. On the other hand, strategies have been developed to facilitate the process of implementation. As we said earlier on, the choice of strategies depends on a host of factors, such as the formulated goals, the extent of reform to be initiated, the nature of existing transformations within society, and the intentions of the reformers - to carry out reform with or without general consensus, with or without the use of force, and through existing channels or otherwise.

Using case studies drawn from many countries in the continents of Africa, Asia and Latin America, Caiden gives a list of factors and situations which must not only be understood but avoided as these result in the failure of major administrative reforms: A bad beginning; imitation, not innovation; incorrect diagnosis; hidden intentions; indecisive approach; faulty planning; unduly restrictive techniques and

instrumentalities; inability to command resources; absence of feedback; no monitoring; evaluation ignored; and goal displacement (Caiden, 1976, pp. 145-164).

Lee is one of those few who have tried time and again to come up with a strategy which will increase the probability of success of any reform effort. He considers the degree of implementation as a function of the social environment, the political structure, the reform agents, the reform agency, and the reform strategy (Lee, 1970, pp. 77-89). He also posits two reform implementation strategies: (a) the comprehensive, and (b) the selective. A comprehensive strategy can be implemented if the leadership of reform agents and the internal structure of the reform agency are strong and if the social environment and political structure are favourable. A selective strategy can be implemented if either:

- (1) the leadership is strong but the situation is unfavourable, or
- (2) the situation is favourable but the leadership is weak.

It follows, then, if the leadership is weak and, at the same time, the situation is unfavourable, no strategy can be expected to be effective. In Lee's matrix, time and leadership are two crucial variables which deserve wider attention.

Lee (1976, pp. 114-125) attempts to relate the types of reforms and the kinds of existing bureaucracies. He argues on the basis of the experience of many countries that programmatic reforms have better probabilities of success as these admirably suit the needs of closed bureaucracies which can be found in most of the developing countries. In other words, to enhance the possibilities of implementation, reformers must have a clear understanding of the nature, type, and objective of reform as well as the stage of bureaucratic development, as in Table 1.1 below.

TABLE 1.1:

| REFORM TYPES              | REFORM OBJECTIVES                        | KINDS OF BUREAUCRACIES |
|---------------------------|--|------------------------|
| Programmatic              | Improved Performance                     | Closed                 |
| Technical<br>Programmatic | Improved Methods<br>Improved Performance | Mixed                  |
| Procedural                | Improved Order                           | Open                   |

Source: Lee, 1976,p.118.

Bhutani goes farther than Lee and asserts that the creation of a conducive environment for the facilitation of the process of reform implementation presupposes the creation, sustenance and spread of appropriate attitudes in men who matter most - men who occupy positions in the administrative hierarchy from where the consequences of good or bad leadership emerge and permeate the entire structure (Bhutani,1966, pp.612-17). Bhutani suggests some ways by which reforms can be implemented with speed and effectiveness. These are: (a) implementors must get involved in the process as early as practicable; (b) an adequate agency for follow-up action must be established; (c) the urge to improve must come from within (whether from an individual or from the organization where reform is introduced) to have lasting improvements; and (d) extreme care must be taken in the choice and training of personnel meant to undertake the implementation of reforms.

Backoff (1974,pp.85-94), through the use of an innovative framework, employs the characteristics of administrative reform to predict the prospect of success in implementing major administrative reforms. The characteristics are: scope, magnitude of change, sequence of change, goals or objectives, reform instrument or means, and evaluation criteria. It is hypothesized that the greater the comprehensiveness, complexity, and magnitude of changes, the lesser the probability of implementation



as there will be more resistance-organized or institutionalised.

Caiden (1970, pp.144-156) suggests four methods of implementation:

- (a) Reforms imposed through political revolution: Political changes are likely to induce sweeping administrative reforms especially among the upper reaches of the administration (politicians and administrators) during a radical transformation of the power elite, as, for instance, a violent revolution or a military take-over, particularly if the new elite is ideologically motivated and inclined to totalitarianism;
- (b) reforms introduced to remedy organizational rigidity: The principal instrument of contemporary administration is the bureaucracy, whose institutionalised behaviour pattern embodied in legal codes may have a life of its own independent of the people who staff it. This rigidity leads to stresses and strains which in turn lead to internal demands for administrative reforms. Flexibility can be introduced internally. First, administrators are constantly reshuffled. No one is permitted to remain in the same job long enough to stamp his personality on the organization. New men are tried all the time. Second, more emphasis is placed on research and projection. Third, steps are taken to prevent excessive rigidity (and of course excessive flexibility) in structure and regulations. Fourth, initiative, creativity, suggestions, and innovations are encouraged by example, and by incentives and promotional schemes. Fifth, boredom is combatted through job turnover, rotation, and joint ownership schemes. Sixth, greater responsiveness is promoted by public relations, consumer research, and complaint units;
- (c) reforms through the legal system: One of the most obvious ways of getting somebody else to do what one wants them to do is to have a law passed. The law, in fact, is becoming an increasingly important method for implementing administrative reforms;

(d) reforms through changes in attitude: Lasting reforms cannot depend on the superiority of power or the coercion of non-believers. Ultimately those who resist reforms have to be won over in spirit as well as body. Their attitudes must change or be changed. To change people's behaviour, "it is necessary to change also their thinking and their attitudes, to anticipate and to seek out anxieties, to talk difficulties out in a kind of mental therapy" (Dimock, 1959, p. 239). Participation unfreezes attitudes, encourages positive responses, permits more balanced interactions, and reduces resistance.

The writings of Cohen, Caiden, Backoff, Lee and others, have greatly helped to clarify and operationalise the complexities that are found in the process of implementation, yet sizeable gaps differentiate pious assumptions from the happenings in real world in the study of administrative reform. Sometimes the gap is too great to distinguish between the ideal and the real, which eventually seriously dampens the prospect of implementation of reforms.

Caiden crystallises the assumptions generally made, consciously or unconsciously:

First, that the government has recognised the need to improve its performance and is determined to do something effective; second that the government has appointed acknowledged experts to identify the weakest points and to concentrate on those remedies likely to have the widest application; third, that the experts with government backing are able to conduct full inquiries and publicise their efforts, whether in temporary ad hoc commissions or more lasting institutional arrangements; and fourth, that the experts are capable of doing a competent job (Caiden, 1976, p. 144).

In practice, things do not exactly follow the idealistic routine. Many governments only pay lip-service to reforms and have no real desire to see major reforms take place but would like to talk about it because of political gains involved. The reform bodies are mostly manned by incompetent people. Serious efforts are seldom made to maintain a balance between politicians, bureaucrats, academicians, and other

outside experts when members are chosen. This uneven composition results in recommendations which are impractical and difficult to implement. Bureaucratic attitudes have not changed, which prompts the perpetuation of negative and hostile attitudes towards any mention of change. Changes are always feared and frowned upon. Reformers have to be extremely fortuitous to expect co-operation from bureaucrats under these circumstances. And cooperation of bureaucrats is necessary to study the situation and eventually to make recommendations for change. Sometimes reformers are not qualified to perform the job that they undertake.

But it may be assumed that the above mentioned gap between the ideal and the real can be narrowed considerably and the task of implementation will be smoother if the government gives serious attention to three types of actions: First, a well-defined and bold policy, a firm decision on the part of political leadership in power to carry out the reforms accepted by it. Second, there is the need for adequate institutional arrangements and safeguards for implementation of reforms. Third, there is an operational plan to push ahead with the implementation of the accepted reforms.

#### EVALUATION

Unless administrative reforms are evaluated, the process is incomplete. Administrative reforms cannot be understood nor evaluated apart from the objectives that they endeavour to achieve. Yet to take the reformers at their word is unscientific, certainly distorting. They should be judged by their deeds alone. Their contribution may be quite marginal. "Their egotistical stance may detract from the 'hewers of wood and drawers of water' who work unobtrusively in the background, yet have a greater impact on the course of events than fleeting reforms" (Caiden, 1970, pp.159-160). Moreover, the reformers might

probably have seen only a part of the whole or they might have misunderstood the situation completely. Furthermore, reformers often declare romantic objectives like democracy and efficiency to veil their undeclared intentions such as more power to the central government; reform may be an overt strategy designed to place the control of government in particular hands - a strategy that is seen as necessary and possible by certain groups at particular points in time when they feel that they are not winning, and cannot win, within the established rules of the governmental game.

Attempts to evaluate administrative reform involve serious methodological problems. Caiden (1970, pp. 157-158) catalogues a number of these problems. First, reform is not an end in itself. Should its success be measured by its contribution to the ultimate objectives of administrative performance? Even if reforms improve end performance, what if the end products do not contribute to social efficiency or the public interest? Second, what constitutes success in reform? Is it the full realization or achievement of the reformers' original objectives? Is it any improvement on the status quo, irrespective of costs? Third, how much of the success can be attributed to the reformers, directly and indirectly? How much is due to factors beyond their control? Is the success merely on paper or have the reformers established built-in desires to ensure continuation? Fourth, is it possible to allow for differences between declared and real aims, between positive and negative aims? Fifth, what time limit should be allowed if results are not immediately forthcoming? What about delayed reactions and cumulative effects? How long do the seeds of reform take to grow and ripen? Sixth, how can charisma be measured when the reformer has personally won over his opponents through patience, cheerfulness, tact, and laconism? Finally, could the reform effort have been used more profitably in other directions? What were the

better alternatives and were they considered? Could more have been achieved at very little extra cost if the reformers had not stopped where they did?

Rarely does the nature of the evidence allow researchers to attempt answers to these methodological problems. Such factors as motivation, morale, and subconscious feelings are beyond recall soon after the event. Rarely do reformers keep a full diary of events. In search of greater accuracy, researchers must be prepared to enter areas in which revelations are harmful and persistent inquiry is discouraged. But to stop short at this point is to court bias and contradiction. To evaluate only part of the evidence is hardly satisfactory or satisfying.

Furthermore, appraisal is not the exclusive right of reformers and reformed. Reformers may not be representative of the society or the situation. They are likely to be 'outsiders', elite aspirants, highly educated, politically sensitive, probably holding influential positions or closely connected with power holders. Their expectations are likely to be higher than most. Even if their aspirations are not met, the results may be pleasing nonetheless to different groups - elite, administrative conservatives, reformed, clientele - for different reasons. The final judgement, therefore, should be with the ordinary men and women whom the entire administrative apparatus is designed to serve. Unfortunately evaluation of this kind is the most neglected aspect in reform implementation. Given articulate public opinion, administrative secrecy, autocratic institutions and sporadic, isolated and uncoordinated efforts to improve performance, there is hardly any strong movement in favour of administrative reform in any country, and people who would like to see better administration do not know what practical steps to take to make their demands felt.

But there is a brighter side. The achievements of reformers are

observable, and it is possible to compare the end results with the original aims. Productivity and the general level of services can be measured, as most organizations endeavour to ascertain their performance according to known criteria (though these may not be the most accurate or reliable of guides). Costs and expenditures are usually readily available. On the basis of these and other known facts, researchers are endeavouring to measure organizational efficiency, social costs, the efficacy of decision-making, the quality of policy-planning, morale, job satisfaction, organizational loyalty, centralization, specialization, and so forth. It is also not difficult to discover whether vice, corruption, and waste have been eliminated and whether behavioural patterns have changed. The records and working papers of reformers and of organizations responsible for surveys of administration are mostly available. The accumulation of this material should in time provide solutions to methodological problems. Nevertheless, evaluation depends largely on its purposes - the questions in which the evaluator is most interested, such as contribution to development, increase in local skills, improvement in social welfare, higher levels of satisfaction, greater dynamism (or self-sustained growth), and rate of circulation of new ideas. The results will differ correspondingly.

#### CONCLUSION

We have said that we will study administrative reform as a process because the sequential trend will enable us to look into both behavioural and structural aspects of administrative reform. The structural aspect will be invaluable in our analysis of the administrative system, while the behavioural will elucidate the human variable in the reform process. The relationship between reformer and target becomes a central issue, not only for the initial structuring of the relationship,

but also for the way in which the reformer goes about studying the problem, gathering information, coming to conclusions and making recommendations. He must not only arrive at good answers but must work in a way that is consistent with the desired changes. In other words, to study administrative reform as a process also includes studying it as a 'system' because we can see the interaction between and among individuals and organizations and thereby of the dynamics of administrative behaviour.

We will therefore study local government reforms in Nigeria and Britain in the light of the aforementioned sequential steps: Diagnosis, Objectives and Strategy, Implementation, and Evaluation. To do this, we will test the various hypotheses of reform in the light of local government reform efforts in both countries, and of course try to formulate our own hypotheses and make recommendations.

In his analysis of the diagnostic stage, Downs concludes that administrative reform becomes necessary when change is insufficient to keep an administration abreast of development, and performance gaps appear, that is, "a significant discrepancy exists between what it is doing and what it 'ought' to be doing" (Downs, 1967, p.191). Of course the maladjustment of the components of an administrative system becomes acute and recognisable when a political group who differs strongly from those previously in office take over power. Thus a diagnosis of the administrative system becomes necessary when it is thought to be inefficient and ineffective; when it cannot meet current demands or when the impact of growth takes it by surprise. Other factors that necessitate administrative reform are said to include growth in the type and size of the clientele served; changes in problems and needs, and, therefore, in organizational programmes as to the proper responsibilities of governments; (result of) new equipment and

advancing knowledge; and changing and usually rising qualifications of personnel (that is, increasing need for specialists). Thus, was local government reform necessary in Nigeria and Britain because unchanging social values could no longer be realised through an outdated administrative system? Or had values changed so that reform was needed? That is, was administrative reform necessary because the administration could not keep abreast of development?

The determination of necessary answers to these hypothetical questions about the need for reform will lead us to the next stage of administrative reform: formulation of goals and strategies. We had referred to Dror's categorization of goal clusters: intra-administration directed goals such as the attainment of economy, efficiency and effectiveness within an organizational context, reduction of corruption and favouritism, introduction of a merit civil service and introduction of a planning-programming-budgetting system. His second category deals with external objectives which mostly concern the overhauling of the administrative system to accelerate wide-ranging social and economic development. Again, the questions we will address ourselves to are: What are the objectives of the 1976 (Britain, 1974) local government reforms? Are the reform objectives given by Mosher, Caiden, Dror and others equally applicable to a developing country (Nigeria) as well as a developed country (Britain)?

Scholars of administrative reform agree that for a reform process to be successful, appropriate strategies are invaluable. Unfortunately there is no universal strategy for administrative reform because every reform must relate to the socio-economic, political and cultural environment of the country. How valid is the assertion that there can be no reform strategy with universal applicability? Since the formulation of an appropriate strategy depends also on the goals



of the reform, and since the reform goals of Britain and Nigeria differ only in a few cases such as the need for national stability in Nigeria, can we therefore have similar strategy? To what extent has Nigeria tried to forge its own strategy?

The implementation stage is normally referred to as the achilles heel of administrative reform because most reform efforts collapse at this stage. Did the pre-1976 (pre-1974, Britain) local government reforms in Nigeria fail because the power or will to carry out the reforms were absent on the part of the political leaders? How true is Lee's hypothesis that time and leadership are two crucial variables in reform implementation? And is it true that the greater the comprehensiveness, complexity, and magnitude of changes, the lesser the probability of implementation?

The last stage, evaluation, is very important in administrative reform. Unless administrative reforms are evaluated, the process is not complete. But how objective can an evaluation of a reform be? Must we base our evaluation on the reformer's goal or the people's feelings and attitudes? That is, whose definition of 'success' should we accept? Do the end products of the reforms contribute to the stated goals such as democracy, efficiency, national stability and economic development? Did the reformers stick to the reform objectives?

The hypotheses we have posed for ourselves will be tested in the main body of the thesis. Our analysis will concentrate on the post-war local government reforms but especially the 1974 and 1976 reforms in Britain and Nigeria respectively. And our observation will lead us to formulate our own hypothesis for local government reform and local development in Nigeria.

In order to understand the changing structure of local government in Nigeria and Britain, and the origins of their ailments and criticisms,

it is pertinent to give a brief historical description of local government in both countries. Then we will examine the major social, economic and political changes that have affected the structures before the recent reforms, and finally the process of local government reorganization since the Second World War will be considered.

## CHAPTER TWO

A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE: NIGERIA AND BRITAIN

## INTRODUCTION

The mastery of any field of political science involves some knowledge of institutional history (Munro, 1913,p.1).

In order to understand how local government in Nigeria and Britain came to be as it was at the time of the 1976 and 1974 reforms respectively, and especially the origins of their defects and criticisms, it is essential to go into a brief historical perspective of both countries.

## NIGERIA

We shall endeavour to examine the local government system, including Indirect Rule, in Nigeria prior to independence in 1960. However, we will need a brief survey of the administrative machinery in Nigeria before the advent of the British. This will throw some light on the working, and our understanding of Indirect Rule and the pre-independence structure of local government.

Nigeria was not a single country before the advent of the British, but she was made up of numerous independent states of differing area and population, some of them under powerful Emirs and Obas (as in the northern and western parts of the country respectively), and some very small states with representative governments such as those of the eastern Nigeria, the Delta area and the so-called 'Middle Belt'.

The large states in the north and west were centred around the Obas and the Emirs who were powerful rulers with vassals in the distant rural areas of their kingdom. These vassals or representatives had to pay tribute and regular taxes to the ruler. In the north, the Emir ruled with a few advisers and usually his district representatives were his

friends, relations or sons. They were answerable to him and held office at the pleasure of the autocratic Emir.

Whereas the southern part of Nigeria has had contact with various European peoples, northern Nigeria had been more or less a 'terra incognita' to the various European peoples until the turn of the present century. Hitherto, the emirates of northern Nigeria had had most, if not all, of their connections with North Africa and the old Sudanese Kingdoms.

The administrative structure in the north was hierarchical in character with the Emir or Chief at the top, counselled, and assisted by his traditional councillors such as the Waziri (vizier), Madaki, the commander-in-chief of the armed forces, and various such others who resided in the emirate headquarters with the Emir. The emirate was divided into territorial fiefs and to each fief a District Head was appointed who was responsible to the Emir for the administration of the area. As the chief representative of the Emir, he was primarily responsible for the maintenance of law and order, collection of taxes and served as 'eyes and ears' of the Emir in the area. The districts were further divided into smaller units called villages and still into smaller units called hamlets. The Village and the Hamlet Heads were responsible to the District Head and they were delegated with responsibility of tax collection in their areas of jurisdiction and also the maintenance of law and order.

In addition to the Emir's court which represented the highest court of appeal in the emirate, there was in each district a local Muslim judge well trained in Muslim law. Recruitment into the ruling group was purely on personal basis, nobility, nepotism and favouritism, except for the Muslim judges who were more often than not appointed on merit.

In western Nigeria, the Oba was a constitutional monarch who ruled with the advice of his chiefs and these chiefs represented different

quarters of his domain. An Oba owed his obaship to his chiefs who could remove him if they lost confidence in him. It was "an oligarchy which responded to public opinion which had a great respect for constitutional authority but could revolt if driven too far by any oppressive acts of the authority" (Orewa, 1966,p.1).

In eastern Nigeria, the village rather than the clan was the common unit of government, and the existence of powerful rulers such as the Obi of Onitsha, was due to the influence from Benin. What at first appears to be rigid conventions in Ibo culture invariably turn out to be the ritual framework within which debate and questioning was carried on.

The revenue collected by the central government was not used to provide services for the local areas. The provision of roads, building of town halls, even the policing of the area against night marauders, were all provided by the local people at the village level. The concept of age grade (see chapter 9) was fully utilized, the young ones provided communal labour such as in building roads while the elders settled petty disputes, leaving serious ones to the Oba's or Emir's court.

#### PRINCIPLES AND APPLICATION OF INDIRECT RULE

The British government did not make any systematic attempt to administer Nigeria until 1903 when Lugard subjugated northern Nigeria, and introduced initially to that part of the country and later to the rest of Nigeria a philosophy of public administration popularly known as indirect rule. This philosophy is "the system by which the tutelary power recognizes existing African societies and assists them to adopt themselves to the functions of local government" (Hailey,1957,p.155). The existing African societies referred to were the 'native authorities' and they were to be guided in the formidable task of adaptation to the functions of local government (certainly not the traditional functions

by implication) by British administrators.

Harold Laski argued that the British administrative service did not welcome innovation, and was positively hostile to the idea of civil liberty. African criticism of British rule was regarded as sedition (Laski, 1938,p.546). The criticism was sometimes linked with the important question of the irresponsible nature of colonial rule, due to the fact that neither the British parliament nor the British electorate showed any continuous interest in African affairs. In spite of the theory of trusteeship, "in (Nigeria), Europeans are masters and Africans servants. The vast majority of Europeans in Africa believe that relationship to be an integral part of the natural order of human society" (Leys,1931,p.102). Leys argued that this lack of administrative responsibility, which would have been a reality in a democratic self-governing community, had led to a denial of ordinary rights and liberties to Africans.

It was argued by supporters of Leninist theories of imperialism that indirect rule was simply a device for keeping Africans in a position from which they could be readily exploited. Other critics of the imperial policy believed that the system had its origins in racist beliefs which held Africans incapable of governing through any institutions other than their own 'inferior' ones. A close analysis of various theories advocating indirect rule suggests that its supporters did in fact believe in the unique quality of British political life, the institutions of which could not be transferred successfully to other people. According to the myth which had grown up about the exploits of the British imperial administration, the people of the colonies were governed much better than they could hope to govern themselves, by men who belonged to the elite of a society which had long accepted the responsibility for governing less fortunate or inferior people (Zimmern,1934,pp.102-3). All

indirect rule arguments envisaged only very gradual change, the prevention of political disruption which might lead to social chaos, and a future which would take care of itself. By their emphasis on the danger of rapid social change, they bolstered indirect rule theories.

#### The Northern Region and Indirect Rule

The Fulani Empire collapsed under the modern weaponry of Lugard in 1903. Lugard then installed British residents at the main towns in the north. Lugard was impressed with the efficiency of the Emirs as rulers. He therefore reappointed them as administrators of their peoples, only restricting them from slave dealing and other inhuman practices, from the establishment of armed forces, and from feudal rights over land. As Campbell puts it, "the Muslim theocratic states possessed an admirable administrative pattern upon which to build an effective local government structure. They had an organized form of taxation; they possessed a separate judiciary of professional judges and the kingdom was divided into administrative sub-areas, each under the control of an appointed executive" (1965, p.115; see also, Kirk-Greene, 1965).

It is important that Lugard did agree to retain the Fulani system even on an experimental basis. In his anxiety to utilize the wonderful intelligence of the 'born rulers' and to solicit their cooperation, Lugard allowed, however, even when he allegedly insisted on good government and justice, the Fulani system to remain as a permanent basis of British colonial administration in northern Nigeria. His insistence on good government and justice, whatever these mean because of the different cultural orientations of the Fulani islamic government and the British western ideas of government and justice, brought into the indirect rule picture what I consider to be the kingpin of the system, namely the British administrative officer who was to assist and guide the Fulani Emirs

and chiefs along the road to good government and justice.

Lugard and subsequent colonial administrators decided to maintain the Fulani system for personal and logistic reasons which were more important than the anxiety to utilize the wonderful intelligence of the 'born rulers'. As Cowan observed:

Lugard used Indirect Rule primarily as a matter of political necessity and not of theory since his administrative staff at the beginning totalled eleven officers for the entire area. Indeed, even as late as 1921 there were only one political officer for every 80,000 inhabitants in the Northern provinces. Neither the finances nor the personnel were available for direct administration..... (Cowan, 1958, pp. 12-13).

One is therefore tempted from the foregoing that the indirect rule system of administration, already used in India and Fiji, was a child of expediency, a makeshift policy ennobled from being just an expedient in times of financial hardship and lack of staff to a complete philosophy of government for Britain's colonial peoples. The traditional organization could only have been assisted and guided to adapt itself to the modern functions of local government by orienting its essential ingredients towards modern development. On the contrary, in their anxiety (I would add, of necessity) to ensure optimum utilization of the traditional organization for the purposes of indirect rule, Lugard and his successors frantically attempted to preserve these ingredients - the Emir and the chief, the Native Treasury, and the Native Courts - in cold storage. And in fact, in the case of the chief the colonial administration introduced a new phenomenon hitherto unheard of in the literature of indigenous African administration, the title of 'sole chief' (abolished in 1952) without reference obviously to any council with whom a chief was always traditionally known to have been associated. The colonial administration did not stop at the introduction of this new phenomenon alone. In the words of Lugard,



the essential feature of the system is that the native chiefs are constituted 'as an integral part of the machinery of the administration'. There are not two sets of rulers - British and native working either separately or in co-operation, but a single Government in which the native chiefs have well-defined duties and an acknowledged status equally with British officials (Lugard, 1965, p. 203).

The consideration of the Emir as part and parcel of the colonial government had the following implications: (a) it had the tendency of isolating the chief from his traditional environment and making him solely responsible to the colonial government for decisions taken affecting his people; (b) one would tend to infer that since the chiefs were dependent largely upon the administration in retaining their posts they acquiesced in whatever proposal was presented to them by the latter without ascertaining the wishes and interests of their people; (c) it would be impossible to supervise them if they were part and parcel of the single Government; and (d) it represented the strengthening of their position vis-a-vis the people which meant weakening the traditional brakes upon the chiefs. Henceforth, the Emir was to have a weak traditional council in a 20th century setting. This weak position of the council was further exacerbated by the declared policy of the colonial administration to bar the western educated elite which was the product of the social and economic changes of the war and post-war periods from participating in the political and administrative life of northern Nigeria. Since members of this group were drawn largely from the 'commoner class' they were usually barred from political office under the traditional authority system in which royal birth and nepotism were the primary criteria for selection. This had dual significance for the failure of local government: not only was there a loss of potential talent, but there was also created a group which had a high degree of political awareness but was alienated from participation in legitimate political activity.

The position and the indispensability of the Resident in carrying out the government policy can hardly be overemphasized. He was the backbone of the system, with the Emir just an arrow in his bow, and his duty was to act as a sympathetic adviser and counsellor to the native chiefs. It was a major responsibility, and a titanic task on his side to educate the Emirs and direct them in their respective administrative duties. Beneath the Resident was the District Officer who supervised and assisted the native rulers and district headmen. He had full responsibility to arrange for the carrying out of all departmental work of the government. He heard appeals from native courts especially in cases relating to land dispute.

#### Southern Nigeria and Indirect Rule

While Lugard busily engaged himself in the reconstruction of the north under indirect rule, the west remained, enjoying no definite measure of administrative control. The extent of jurisdiction exercised over the inhabitants by the government was vague. Various states remained independent under one treaty or the other with the British Government. Residents were, however, posted to these states, but they possessed and exercised powers no less than those of consulates. Local administration remained entirely the business of the indigenous authorities guided and advised by the District Officer or Commissioner. Judicial system which then appealed to them as the sole machinery of administration received particular attention. There were three grades of courts, the Supreme Court whose jurisdiction was extended to the Western Provinces in 1900, Native Council, and Native Court. The Native Council exercised, primarily, judicial functions, having the District Commissioner at the head of other members nominated by the High Commissioner. The Native Council had also power to make rules relating to modification of native

law, regulation and promotion of trade, and generally to maintain peace.

The court system never seemed to have proved an effective system of administration. The Native Council for instance could not be properly called 'native' since the court was nominated by the District Commissioner. The local officers of administration relied on the little powers vested on them in respect of the Native Council. On various occasions they were at sea to discern the policy of the government, or the extent of its executive powers. The Egbas, for instance, presented an anomalous position, where the government was carried out in the name of the Alake, who was himself illiterate, by an able and educated native.

The position of the south-eastern part of Nigeria was in fact unique. The measure of authority exercised by the government during this period, and even up to the time of amalgamation of the Northern and Southern Provinces was insignificantly infinitesimal. The coastal strips of this region, especially Bonny and Calabar, had early contacts with the Europeans, but purely on commercial grounds. In order, at this time, to overcome the hazards that beset the British traders, the Home Government merely appointed a consul for the Bights of Benin and Biafra. The consul dealt with commercial cases, though in cases concerning the natives, they acted in full collaboration with the native chiefs. By 1872, the consul and court of equity received legal recognition. After the provinces had come properly to the grip of British Government, the same court system was retained. Thus in 1906 a Native Council Ordinance provided for the establishment of Native Council or courts, with other minor subordinate courts. The jurisdiction of the native council was exactly as it was in the Western Provinces. The court became an executive arm of the government. The idea of warranting chiefs to attend the court sprang up.

The native court could hardly prove an effective administrative

organization; the native members had no real powers in the court, they were mere puppets. The court far from being the Commissioner's court was dominated by the court clerk who exploited the situation by lording it over illiterate warrant chiefs. Maintenance of justice became the hallmark of administration. Primary needs of the society were played down. The District Commissioner was most of the time preoccupied with other functions, that delegation was inevitably often made to the corrupt court clerks.

It would therefore appear that the success or otherwise of indirect rule very much depended upon the leadership qualities of the administrative officers - setting goals, clarifying objectives, etc. Unfortunately, however, not all 'political officers' were development oriented. The first phase of indirect rule from 1900-1925 saw some of the most influential officers develop a philosophy of indirect rule which was inimical to development. Brian Smith (1967, pp.32-33) noted the example of Charles Temple, one of the most distinguished Residents of the first decade of indirect rule. Temple believed that the duty of the British administrative officer was to preserve the social structure and cultures of indigenous societies from disrupting effects of contact with an alien civilization. The practical implications of this are not far to seek. Development plays a very secondary role to the business of creating local administration which might have existed under ideal conditions prior to British suzerainty. It should be observed at once that the tendency to 'preserve' the emirates in the cold storage was not only an attempt to back-pedal them which was antithetical to development, but also myopic which represented lack of managerial vision. It ought to have been clear, though not to Temple, that the effect of this would be to reinforce the suffocating blanket of tradition; that to the extent that the British had occupied northern Nigeria at all, it would have been

impossible for him and others of his ilk, to steer the tide of contact with an alien civilization with all its disrupting effects; and that the attempt to insulate the emirates from 'anything new' would operate towards their stagnation.

One can therefore conclude, with some justification, that the role of the administrative officer was in general negative, insisting upon the preservation of the Native Authorities in very near their original form which was antidotal to development. Thus the failure of the upper management to set goals, clarify objectives, develop procedures, plan, schedule and project itself into the future is very visible. Like an observer at a burial procession, one could visualize the dramatis personae moving in a long calvacade like 'processionary caterpillars', one processionary leading and the other following - each with his eyes half closed and his head snugly fitted against the rear extremity of his predecessor. "They mistake activity for accomplishment. They meant well but got no place" (Randal, 1967, p.4.). Needless to add that it is a situation which smacks of managerial incompetence. Bearing in mind that development is not a natural process, and requires powerful and resourceful change agents, this transparent managerial incompetence became profoundly convulsing.

#### Amalgamation and the extension of Indirect Rule to the Western and Eastern Provinces

The amalgamation of the Northern and Southern provinces of Nigeria in 1914 had far-reaching consequences on the development of the system of native administration in Western and Eastern Nigeria. It led to an attempt to apply the well-tried, ill-defined formula of indirect rule, as developed in the Northern provinces, to the southern half of the country. The official reason for the decision to apply indirect rule to the south

was that it was necessary to apply a uniform policy of local government throughout the whole of the newly created country (Lugard, 1920, para 16). But apart from administrative convenience, the amalgamation was economically viable especially in the face of economic stagnation of the north. The north had depended largely on grants-in-aid which the Imperial Parliament could ill afford. Thus to boost the north, it had to be merged with the prosperous south.

The amalgamation, however, did not sufficiently extend administration to the villages which had all along been ignored. Rather the court system was the main organ of administration in these villages. Courts were reorganized but it did not take Lugard long to realise that success in the northern administration was not founded on efficient courts, but depended on a good taxation system and well established treasuries. He was convinced that without reasonable financial backing any administration was doomed to fail. A major obstacle, however, existed in this area with respect to tax collection. Apart from payment of tributes and tithes to their chiefs or Obas, the Yorubas had known no system of taxation. The introduction of direct taxation in 1916 was greeted with vehement resentment and disturbances in Iseyin and Abeokuta. The announcement by the government in 1927 of its intention to introduce direct taxation was greeted with the most sullen acquiescence in certain districts, and the worst experience was the 'Aba Riot' which was the direct outcome of unfounded rumours and suspicion that women were going to be taxed.

The Aba Riot was a turning point in the history of native administration for it was only after it that intensive investigations and research were conducted on the lines of knowing what the native institutions in the South-Eastern Provinces were with a view to using them as units of local government. It had been found necessary to accommodate the atomic units in the South-East and Middle Belt Provinces.

Donald Cameron who took over as the Governor came fully determined to make indirect rule look more attractive than before. To him the allegiance of a people to a tribal head freely given and without external cause is the essence of true indirect rule. It was paramount in his mind to see that the greatest aims to be pursued at all costs were those of building on the existing organization and ideas of the people; of leaving it to the people themselves assisted by sympathetic advisers to devise and develop their own local institutions in accordance with their own standards of modern civilization and of resisting the temptation to play the part of 'King makers' or constitution makers. Thus Cameron insisted that village units in the Middle Belt and the South-Eastern Provinces should retain their identities as judicial and executive bodies. Where, however, a more powerful and vigorous authority existed and was surrounded by smaller units numerically and financially weak and barely able to maintain themselves, and provided these units exhibited a disposition favourable to amalgamation it was highly desirable to encourage them to group themselves with their most powerful neighbour. He took care to identify various types of native authority such as chiefs-in-council, council of elders, and stressed strongly the need to preserve the essentially democratic character of indigenous institutions and thereby abolished the autocratic ideas of indirect rule. He changed emphasis in the method of preserving the indigenous institutions as mere 'museum pieces' to directing their evolution towards representative organs of democratic local government. He found that it was not easy to democratize the northern emirates radically, and he therefore preferred a gradual process. The native authorities were not to be accepted solely because they were traditional, but merely because they were acceptable to their people. He brought a change of emphasis from the rule by the chiefs to the rule by the chiefs and council. Native authority

was just an instrument through which advancement could be made in the social, economic welfare of the local people, and was not to be regarded perpetually as upholders of law and order (Cameron,1934).

#### Decline of Indirect Rule and the Need for Reform

Right from its introduction, indirect rule had not only been subject to vehement opposition, but had also provoked a lot of adverse criticisms both from within and from without the country, and even the most articulate critiques were among those who served in the administration itself. Just as Lord Lugard had his followers through the 1920s and 1930s, so also did a person like Lord Hailey have his precursors amongst many of the commentators on the theory and practice of indirect rule. Criticisms of this method of government began even before Lugard's The Dual Mandate was published in 1922. Probably the earliest really trenchant criticism came from a district officer in Nigeria, Fitzpatrick, who argued that the system of indirect rule replaced the comparatively more desirable system of 'autocracy, tempered by assassination' (Fitzpatrick,1924,p.619). The protection of the autocratic rulers by British bayonets created a feudal system which was inefficient, expensive and corrupt. In his view the administration had been needlessly duplicated and, so far as the native administration was concerned, the population tended to divide into those on the pay-roll and those paying taxes. In order to put an end to this corruption, with which he believed the British were identified, he advocated an increased European administrative staff, with African additions where possible, to undertake all administrative services. Another criticism in the same vein came from Lord Raglan who categorised all chiefs as tyrants or weaklings so that "the administration is placed in the dilemma of having either continually to upset the decisions of the chiefs or else to connive at injustice" (Raglan,1923,p.579).



Fitzpatrick and Lord Raglan were critical of the operation of indirect rule, especially the strengthened position of the Emir and their (Emirs') enhanced prestige at the expense of older indigenous institutions. We have said that the aim of indirect rule was to preserve indigenous institutions which, the British administration believed, had some value for Africans as a good basis for administrative take off. In Nigeria, it seemed that some indigenous institutions had been ignored, while others had been preserved and made more resistant to change.

Criticisms of indirect rule became more frequent after 1930 due to socio-economic and political changes in Britain and Nigeria (see chapters 3 and 4). These criticisms were centred around the two questions of whether or not the system did preserve African institutions, and whether such institutions could be made the basis for gradual political development. Many critics suggested that old institutions were not really being preserved at all. Old sources of political legitimacy had been destroyed inevitably, the more democratic aspects of Nigerian societies undermined, and Nigerian aristocracies entrenched in positions from which they could now be removed only by the British administration. One critic pointed to the danger of indirect rule bolstering the power of oppressive and incompetent chiefs (Leys, 1931, p. 70) while Rattray thought that the people themselves were likely to become estranged within the system because it had produced centralized Nigerian autocracies "disregarding the bases of former African constitutions and states which were essentially decentralized and democratic" (Rattray, 1934, p. 22). Was it not the case, the critics asked, that African chiefs had become the tools of the British, and were often so regarded by their own people, especially the educated ones?

In so far as the institutions could be said to have survived they were increasingly anachronistic. The critics believed that political systems should reflect economic and social realities, which meant that

there should be a chance for participation in politics for the increasingly large number of Nigerians who lived outside the tribal milieu. This fundamental criticism shaded into a second one which was to the effect that people learn about politics by being active in politics. Under the system of indirect rule, important groups were denied a chance to participate, while the role of the traditional elite was seriously restricted and distorted by the imposition of an alien super-structure.

There were thus three main criticisms of indirect rule. It was an inefficient and corrupt method of governing alien people; it was a vehicle of reaction and not progress; it had the effect of submerging democratic elements in tribal society under an authoritarian framework. These criticisms were commonly connected with whether or not the system was likely to impede or enhance the development of institutions through which Nigerians would eventually govern themselves. It is clear that Lord Hailey doubted the wisdom of maintaining indirect rule for this reason. It was also true, said the critics, that educated Nigerians themselves were critical of indirect rule and regarded this method of administration as an imperialist device for preventing development, or as an indication that the British regarded them as inferior people who could not be expected to operate in their superior western institutions. Leonard Barnes, for example, argued that Africans rightly understood that local institutions and traditions were preserved

less from any sense that these things may be intrinsically worthy of preservation and development than in a profound conviction of their inferiority to British counterparts and therefore to their suitability to backward people (Barnes, 1935, p. 284).

The system of indirect rule could be interpreted therefore as a Machiavellian design to keep the Nigerian in his place, and a means of actually preventing development. The educated Nigerian was being turned against the British by "the not wholly unjust doubts about the

honesty of our intentions" (Macmillan,1934,p.137).

Some of the criticisms of indirect rule imputed to large groups of Europeans, involved in colonial politics, a kind of sinister design to defraud the African. Certainly the intention to exploit Africa for European benefit found expression in the theory of the dual mandate. Cotterell went farther, suggesting that Africans were regarded as the guinea pig savage of brave new world whom "the anthropologist would like nothing better than to see pinned-down in a kind of mental cold storage, preserving for perennial future study the paradox of arrested development" (Cotterell,1934,p.454).

A criss-cross strand of argument runs through Sir Donald Cameron's egotistic evangelical mission: "we are using their own indigenous institutions in order to promote higher standards of civilization amongst them. This is the most vital principle in my conception" (Cameron,1937,p.9). The belief that existing institutions made the best basis for change was a Burkean notion. It was part of the British conservative tradition that change should always be introduced slowly, retaining what was valuable in the existing institutions of society; this conservatism bedevilled local government in Britain.

The 'indirect rulers' knew, and perhaps felt a sense of guilt, about the damage done to African societies in the past. The missionaries, an integral part of the administration, tried to suppress those aspects of African social system (e.g. age grade) most clearly anathema to Christian beliefs as interpreted through western culture. There existed a conflict between a belief in the advantages of progress as manifested in the application of scientific discoveries to the solution of human problems and a recognition of the loss of a sense of security which the individual tends to suffer in a mass society. As we have mentioned earlier, the attempt was to exacerbate the gulf that existed between 'us' and 'them',

demonstrated in the British attempt to define where, when and what he could participate in. Admittedly the aim of the British Government was to grant independence when it felt that Nigerians were 'mature'. But how could they mature in cold storage, when the Imperial Government had failed to undertake a programme of mass education; when it had failed to provide adequate resources to attack disease and poverty; when it had allowed British nationals to exploit Nigerian resources without encouraging genuine economic growth and development? Above all, it had failed to provide experience in government which would have made the transfer of power to Nigerians and the practice of democracy a success. All these failures, to use Professor James O'Connell's words, led to the inevitability of instability in Nigeria and to the demise in which local government found itself. "They saw instability ahead for newly created states in which existed extremes in educational standards and in which ethnic loyalties had been encouraged, under the system of indirect rule, at the expense of national loyalties" (Crocker 1936,p.215).

The Labour Monthly epitomized the suffering of Africans:

In the colonies millions of coloured people are denied the vote; they are not consulted about the administration nor about the management of their lives...Government is carried on by ordinance; there is no freedom of speech nor of the press; trade union and political organization is either illegal or functions under the daily threat of a persecution for 'sedition'. The peasantry are driven by heavy taxes from their land to work in British owned mines...; and, as workers they are paid a few shillings a month and are forced to live in foul conditions, so that the British capitalist may earn his profits (Labour Monthly, 1939,pp.757-8).

It was a serious defect of indirect rule that it was not democratic.

The initial mistake was that the indigenous institutions of government which had existed as democratic and decentralized were ignored, especially in the South-Eastern Provinces and the Middle Belt, where the atomized units of government seemed to present some difficulty in discerning any power or authority which could be utilized for local government purposes,

but indeed it was in these societies that one could find the germs, the very essence of everything upon which indirect rule should have been built. The Aba Riot was a great lesson. The importance of villages was later realised. Something approaching democracy was introduced after autocracy had been entrenched. Training in democracy should normally have been expected to precede its introduction to ensure that democracy is firmly rooted and maintained. In almost all over Nigeria democracy implied that the affairs of the state rested not in the hands of a few, but was the concern of the whole people. It was unforeseeable to think of democracy as the same thing as a rule by a 'sole native authority'. To the educated people this was no democracy, nor was it near to it. It was undemocratic to allow the Governor or the Resident the right to recognize or depose a chief. It was true that the people were later allowed to recommend a chief of their own choosing, but the ultimate power to recognize and depose him rested in the Governor, a situation quite strange to the people. By their own tradition, the people had their own way of removing reactionary chiefs (Johnson, 1921, pp. 70-71). Democracy, therefore, was lacking in Nigeria, and as Dr. Miller very well put it, "Nigeria was ruled administratively on the principle that was the very antithesis to that of democracy" (Miller, 1947, p. 29.)

Another damaging attack on indirect rule was the idea of segregating the educated classes from the illiterate masses, a policy introduced by Lord Lugard. This was implicit in his plan for educational systems in the Northern Provinces. Worse still was the policy of excluding the educated natives from the native authorities, and from the administrative service on the general belief that no native was suited for such responsibility as that of the administrative officer, rather they could continue to serve as clerks (Coleman, 1958, p. 163). Another principle of native administration which received a stinging attack

was the educational policy, especially that of the north. It was forcefully argued that education was not moving as fast as would be expected.

Thus, the colonial government was an undemocratic institution designed to maintain British authority. Decisions were imposed from above. In practice, this meant that the political officers wanted someone to whom they could give orders and who could be held responsible for carrying them out. Indirect rule, which formed the philosophical basis of British rule incorporated the indigenous political structure and thereby provided the cheapest means by which this authority could be preserved. However, indirect rule only worked where the traditional political institutions were authoritarian. These problems - lack of democracy, nepotism, corruption, inefficiency and ineffectiveness - remained basically unsolved at the time of the 1976 reform (see chapter 5) despite the changes of the early fifties (see chapters 3 and 4).

## BRITAIN

At the beginning of this chapter we stated the reasons for going into an historical analysis of both countries. To these might be added the fact that this historical background affords us the opportunity to analyse the extent of change brought about by the 1976 and 1974 reforms in Nigeria and Britain respectively.

### Mediaeval and Tudor Period

We have said that no system of local government is devised in a vacuum. It cannot be separated from social, economic, and political conditions that form its environment. Local government in Britain arose from men tackling problems as they developed - such problems as the maintenance of law and order, the relief of the poor, and the building

and repair of highways. Richards (1978,p.11) has described how the three traditional units of local government in England and Wales have been the county, the parish and the borough, each possessing a considerable degree of independence. The three traditional units came into existence during the Middle Ages when the country was still predominantly agricultural with a widely scattered population. Each county was administered by a county court presided over by the Sheriff appointed by the Crown. The counties were divided into 700 hundreds each administered by a hundred court. At a lower level of the rung came the township which constituted a rudimentary police authority and each of which was represented at the hundred court by its Reeve and four men. Within the townships were the parishes, or areas of administration round the churches although the parish later acquired non-ecclesiastical functions.

The system of local government based upon the sheriff and the county, hundred and parishes fell into disuse, and in the first instance, most of the duties were undertaken by Justices of the Peace appointed by the Crown on their circuits around the country. The Justices maintained law and order. New social and economic problems accompanied the growth of industry, particularly the woolen industry, in the 16th century. The enclosure (fencing-in) of common fields resulted in many unemployed serfs who urgently needed relief, and the dissolution of the monasteries by Henry VIII ended an important form of charity for the poor. The declining social conscience of the larger landlords led to the neglect of highways and footpaths at a time when increased commerce produced the need for a better system of road maintenance.

To meet these demands local government was reorganised on the basis of the parish with Justices of the Peace undertaking a co-ordinating

and controlling role. A considerable body of new legislation followed. By the Statute of Highways 1553, each parish had to appoint two surveyors responsible for the repair of roads in the parish, and the inhabitants were required to devote 'four days' labour a year to the maintenance work. Wealthier persons could pay a highway rate in lieu of work, and this money was used to pay the poor working on the roads. The administrative duties of the parish were greatly increased by the Poor Relief Act 1601. Each parish had to appoint an overseer who recovered a rate from local inhabitants for the purchase of materials on which the poor could work. It seldom proved practicable to provide the work and it was largely replaced by the distribution of relief financed by a parish rate. Hence each parish carried out its duties through four categories of unpaid officer-overseer of the poor, surveyor, constable and churchwarden (Richards, 1978,p.13).

### The Eighteenth Century

The control of the Justices of the Peace by the central administration came to an end after the Revolution of 1688. Quarter sessions operated as the principal link between central and local administration. The members of this body met at least four times a year for judicial business. It was natural that they should discuss county affairs. The duties of the Justices were few in comparison to modern standards, but the growth of the new industrial towns created new social problems. In short, the rise of industrialism made the old system of government chaotic and out of date.

Among the influences which contributed to the need to reform local government were:

(a) The movement to fence-in common land in order to secure agricultural improvements led to many farm workers being driven from the land. They



flocked into the towns to seek employment and placed a strain on such local government services as existed;

(b) many parish vestries safeguarded the interests of privileged groups and paid no attention to the interests of the community. And most town councils neglected their public duties and failed to promote municipal interests. The public officers themselves were corrupt and inefficient;

(c) there was a tremendous increase in the rate of industrial development from about 1750. The increase was mainly brought about by the harnessing of steam to provide power for machines. This power was worth supplying only to many large machines, and this meant that they had to be brought together in factories. The old system of domestic production declined, and more and more people went to work in factories. Towns grew up around the factories, and the resultant problems led to demands for the extension of local government services and for a more efficient local government structure;

(d) the transformation of the country from an agricultural society to an industrial one created problems with which local government could not cope, such as sanitation, water supply, public health all of which called for expert knowledge and large resources;

(e) the Parish Overseers of the Poor were unable to handle the problems of the parishes where manufacturing interests had created new centres of population;

(f) the problem of poverty, easy to manage when applicants for relief were few, became more difficult as enclosure and industrial change swept the country;

(g) the Industrial Revolution raised the standard of living and lowered the death rate. The rapid increase in population which followed gave

rise to serious administrative problems (Stones,1968,pp.5-6).

To remedy these problems, various ad hoc authorities were established to provide specific services. Local Acts created improvement commissioners to undertake such duties as paving, lighting, street-cleaning and general improvements, financed through rates. Other local Acts empowered the establishment of corporations to take over poor relief functions from the unpaid 'parochial' overseers. In like manner turnpike trustees were charged with the maintenance of existing main roads and the provision of new ones, and were authorised to levy tolls on road users (Hart and Garner,1973,p.24).

### The Nineteenth Century

The system of local government had to be reformed again during the early part of the 19th century because of sweeping demographic, social and economic changes that had taken place. These reforms led to a system of parishes, counties, boroughs and ad hoc bodies.

In 1832 there were over 15,000 parishes, each being a distinctive unit of local administration but varying considerably in area, population, and the number and method of appointment of officials (Smellie,1946,p.12). The parishes in towns and cities exercised important functions in common with rural parishes. It was the right of all inhabitants to have a say in parish business and to perform, in turn, parish duties. "In practice arrangements for the administration of the parish reflected its economic and social order, and open parish vestries were often a small oligarchy of intimate neighbours presided over<sup>by</sup> the clergyman or senior churchwarden and dominated by neighbouring Justices of the Peace (Seeley,1978,p.3).

In general, the system worked well, particularly in settled rural communities. In the new industrial towns people did not know one another and community spirit was weak. The close or select vestries

which became established lent themselves to corrupt practices by consisting of a restricted number of people (10 to 24) serving for life and filling vacancies by co-option. Parish duties were heavy and dirty, and many people were willing to pay to get out of doing them. This led to the rise of local 'bosses' who controlled all the civic offices.

The first changes in the legal constitution of the parishes were made by the Sturge Bourne Acts of 1818 and 1819. These Acts introduced a property qualification and plural votes (up to a maximum of six votes for highly rated properties). A minority of about 3,000 parishes adopted these arrangements and they tended to become combinations of tradesmen bound together by local interests (Smellie, 1946, pp. 15-16).

The Hobhouse Act 1831 introduced another sweeping change whereby every ratepayer, male or female, secured a single 'parochial' vote. It also provided for annual elections and vote by ballot, but restricted the choice of electors to people with such a high rating qualification that most were excluded.

The duties of the Justices of the Peace increased considerably although there were only 5,000 in 1832 compared with 3,000 in 1689, and the Justices struggled under the load of numerous statutes. The office became specialised and required such expert knowledge that few people were qualified to accept it, and of those who were qualified to do the job, few cared to take it on. The new industrial towns were not pleasant enough to attract the landed gentry, from whom Justices were usually recruited. The position was therefore occupied by someone who was inefficient and corrupt.

About 200 municipal corporations were outside the jurisdiction of the Justices of the Peace. They tended to safeguard the interests of traders and craftsmen and usually failed to provide sound administration. They were inefficient because:

- (a) Councils often felt that they had no responsibility for social problems. The members of the council confined their activities to the administration of corporate property;
- (b) members of the corporations (when they were not manufacturers themselves) considered that the industrialists should meet the needs of the workers whom they had brought into the towns for their own profit;
- (c) even where the council was willing to act, it was not always easy for it to acquire the power to do so;
- (d) often a town had extended beyond its ancient boundaries; its powers to provide services ended at its legal boundaries.

An ad hoc authority is one which is created for a special purpose and which exercises only one function. The inadequacies of the traditional local government system had resulted in the setting up of various ad hoc bodies. About 200 local Acts had been passed to establish incorporated guardians of the poor, while over 1,100 turnpike trusts had been formed of which the more important ones appointed permanent paid officers and experimented with different road profiles and surfaces. Improvement Commissioners were extending their activities from roads, street-lighting and police to water and gas supplies and provision of fire engines. Although the enthusiasm of some of the new authorities diminished and they were not all incorruptible, nevertheless they provided services which the traditional activities could not supply, and were in fact the beginnings of modern local government at a time when the county and borough systems were becoming increasingly ineffective (Richards, 1978, p.16).

Thus, at the beginning of the 19th century, the traditional structure of local government which had served the country for centuries, was crumbling in the face of rapid socio-economic changes. The system which had been adequate in an agricultural society with few social problems was inadequate when confronted by the pressing social needs of a society

which was becoming increasingly industrial. The early 19th century reform was in response to social and economic changes which made the system of local government obsolete and created problems.

### Nineteenth Century Socio-Economic Change

Mention has already been made of the fact that local government cannot be separated from the social, economic, and political conditions in which it exists and operates. The 19th century saw dramatic changes in the structure of local government in England in response to environmental changes. During the early 19th century the following factors were among those which affected the growth of local government and the need for its reform:

(a) The growth of industry: The development of steam-driven machinery killed home industry, since the new source of power was worth supplying only to many machines in factories. The factories needed many workers, who were housed in towns. The concentrated new urban developments of the Industrial Revolution created an urgent need for improved local government services of all kinds.

(b) The growth of trade-union activities: The change in industry from domestic (taking place in the home) to factory production brought together large numbers of workers, who became organized and began to feel that they had power. As they grew and became stronger they added their weight to the demand for local government to improve living conditions and provide amenities.

(c) The French Revolution: The ruling classes were shocked by what had happened in France, and felt that the same thing could occur here unless the working classes were kept down. Strong measures, such as the Combination Acts of 1799 and 1800, tried to prevent the rise of working-class organizations which could press for reform. These Acts forbade any

united action by masters or workmen to raise or lower wages or to increase or diminish the hours or quality of work. During the Napoleonic Wars (1793-1815) there was no great demand for reform because there was prosperity. "The slump in the years following the end of the Wars and the repeal of the Combination Acts in 1824 increased the demand for reforms" (Stones, 1968, p.11).

(d) The rise of political parties: Until the 19th century political parties tended to be loose associations of people with the same attitude to the questions of the day. The arrangement was very flexible. By the 19th century the country was more definitely in two political camps, both representative of the middle class. The Conservative Party reflected the views of the landed gentry, who favoured the established system of rural local government. The Liberal Party was that of the industrialists, who wanted to see reform in the towns. The tussle between the two elements helped to determine the form which local government was to take.

(e) 'Laissez-faire' and Utilitarianism: One of the most important principles to which men subscribed during the 19th century was that of 'laissez-faire' - a belief in a free competitive economy and a strong conviction that it was wrong for a government to interfere with the actions of individuals.

This idea was taken a stage further by Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832), who said that the value of any governmental or individual action could be tested by seeing whether it resulted in the greatest good for the greatest number of people. He applied his idea to a study of the local government system and concluded that local government could be improved by electing the local authorities in accordance with a standard procedure, by giving them greatly increased powers and functions, and by auditing their accounts. These two concepts and a more enlightened social conscience led to more demands for local government reforms.

(f) The Reform Act, 1832: Before 1832 Parliament was composed of two

members from each county and each borough regardless of size and population. In the counties those persons were allowed to vote who held the freehold of land worth more than forty shillings a year (Stones, 1968, p.12).

The Reform Act 1832 extended the vote to the middle classes and this resulted in a Liberal Government dedicated to further reform. The first statute affecting local government was the Poor Law Amendment Act 1834 which established very strong central control through the Poor Law Commissioners. Some 700 unions (groupings of parishes) replaced the 15,000 parishes for the administration of poor relief, based on convenient administrative areas, under elected Boards of Guardians of the Poor, who appointed salaried officials.

In 1833 the Government set up a Royal Commission to inquire into the state of the municipal corporations in England and Wales. The corporations were in need of reform because they were corrupt, inefficient and strongly biased in religion and politics, and, therefore, in their administration of charitable trusts. The Commission's report led to the passing of the Municipal Corporations Act 1835, which laid the foundations for the present-day system of local self-government, with elected councils which were unconnected with the administration of justice. There were however serious limitations as a large proportion of the inhabitants could not vote and the powers of the new councils were confined to the management of corporate property, control of police and making of bye-laws, although these powers were extended by subsequent statutes. The Act was applied to 178 of the 246 boroughs, but London and 67 very small boroughs were not included.

Richards (1978, p.17) describes the remarkable difference of approach between the last two Acts. Poor Law reform was based on strong central control, uniform arrangements, rationalisation of areas and the ad hoc

principle. The Municipal Corporations Act 1835 gave authority to local representatives subject to a minimum of central control, maintained existing areas and created organizations which could each administer a wide range of services.

Public health was the next service which demanded attention. Using statistics collected by the new local registry offices, Edwin Chadwick, Secretary to the Poor Law Commissioners, produced a report showing that there was a connection between the amount of sickness and the amount of poor relief which was paid. By the middle of the 19th century, about half the population lived in towns and by 1880 the proportion had increased to over two-thirds (Smellie, 1946, p. 77). Of fifty large towns in England and Wales in 1845, scarcely one had a good drainage system and only six a really pure water supply. Living conditions were filthy and squalid, with a consequent danger of cholera and the plague (Stones, 1968, p. 16).

Chadwick argued that the amount spent on poor relief could be reduced if sickness were prevented. The Public Health Act 1848 authorised the establishment of a General Board of Health overseeing local boards of health, charged with the duty of providing water supply and drainage either where the inhabitants requested it or where the death rate exceeded 23 per 1,000. Municipal corporations assumed these responsibilities for their areas. The General Board of Health was abolished in 1858 but the 670 established local boards of health remained.

By the middle of the century the turnpike trusts were encountering problems with road maintenance. It had become evident that a parish was too small an area for road maintenance and in 1862 the county justices were given powers to create unions of parishes as highway districts. These proved unpopular and many villages opted out of highway districts by adopting the Public Health Act 1848 and the Local Government Act 1858,



and forming their own local board of health, which entitled them to separate highway powers. The Local Government Act 1863 blocked this loophole by stipulating that only parishes with a population of at least 3,000 could apply for local board of health status. However, many villages obtained this status by 1863 and some remained as urban districts until 1974. Some of the highway districts were never established and others ceased to function, resulting in responsibility for roads reverting to the parishes (Richards ,1978,p.19).

The Second Reform Act 1867 gave the vote to urban workers but it was not until 1884 that this was extended to rural workers. A more enlightened Parliament recognised the confusion, variation and overlap of local government bodies and functions. This was glaring in the administration of public health, where powers were vested in the vestry, guardians of the poor, local boards of health, borough councils and improvement commissioners. The Royal Sanitary Commission which reported in 1871 found "a chaotic system which made efficient local government impossible" (Stones,1968, pp.17-18). In 1871 the Local Government Board was established with poor law, public health and registration of births and deaths functions.

The first compulsory Public Health Act in 1875 revised and rationalised public health law and introduced a simplified pattern of urban and rural sanitary authorities, although the general structure of local government administration was still confusing and cumbersome (Seeley,1978,p.6). For example, the urban sanitary authorities were highway authorities but not poor law authorities, while in rural areas the poor law authorities had sanitary functions and often highway responsibilities.

In 1870 Gladstone's Liberal Government gave the parish the responsibility to provide a school where it had not already been provided by the church or other voluntary agency. School attendance became

compulsory in 1876 and free in 1891 (Richards,1978,p.19).

Meanwhile London had been excluded from the operation of Municipal Corporation's Act 1835 and was probably the worst governed area in the country. The capital had expanded substantially outside the one square mile occupied by the City of London, and the corporation showed little interest in the adjoining areas. Many important services were administered by the Metropolitan Board of Works established in 1855, based on a system of indirect election through district boards. The Metropolitan Board acquired further wide-ranging powers over time, some of which it is claimed were administered corruptly.

#### Structural Reforms: 1880-1944

By 1880, the local government system was in chaos, ripe for reform. Seeley described the position in 1885 as "a chaos of areas, a chaos of franchises, a chaos of authorities, and a chaos of rates" (1978,p.6). The range of sizes of borough was enormous - from half a million population in Liverpool to a few hundred in Shaftsbury (Smellie,1946,p.47). There were over a dozen different kinds of rates and even elections were held at different times, in different ways and on different franchises. It became evident that the creation of numerous ad hoc bodies was not conducive to maximum efficiency and that a simple system of general local authorities offered distinct advantages.

The system needed reform also because important changes in suffrage had taken place. The 1867 Reform Act had extended the vote to the new industrial working class, whilst the 1884 Act gave the vote to the agricultural working class. These changes in the political environment, themselves reflections of further social, economic and physical environmental changes, were to lead to further reforms in the structure of English local government. This second period of reform was

essentially one of 'consolidation' and established a structure of local government which, outside London, was to remain largely unchanged until 1974.

The essential pieces of legislation in this period were the Acts of 1888, 1894 and 1929. As a result of the first two, the structure of local government was unitary or single tier in the larger towns, and two or even three tier in the rest of the country.

The Local Government Act 1888 established the county councils, with a similar framework to the boroughs, consisting of councillors elected by the ratepayers and aldermen elected by the councillors. In the counties the administrative powers of the Justices of the Peace were transferred to elected county councils. The original proposals had been that all the country should be governed by county councils, who would act as a link between government departments and the smaller local authorities within the counties. However, many of the larger boroughs were unwilling to be swallowed up by counties, whose councils would be motivated by rural interests. These large boroughs were able to bring pressure to bear on the Government, and the Act, when passed, excluded from control by the counties all the municipal boroughs which had a population of more than 50,000 and four others (Chester, Worcester, Burton-on-Trent, and Canterbury) which had a population of less than 50,000. The authorities which were excluded from control by the counties were known as county boroughs - single-tier authorities with the powers and duties of both counties and boroughs for their areas.

The 1888 Act was a major step towards the concept of sub-legislatures and provision was incorporated for decentralisation from Parliament to county but this was never implemented. The Act also attempted to establish basic principles for providing monetary aid to local authorities, by isolating central aid to local government from other forms of national

expenditure and thereby restricting central supervision of local administration. The majority of specific grants were replaced by a single combined grant to be paid from a separate local taxation account, funded from forty per cent of the product of certain national taxes (assigned revenues). The system was later discontinued as the assigned revenues did not increase at the same rate as local authority expenditure and successive governments were not prepared to increase the range or proportion of revenues paid to the local taxation account. This was the beginning of a continuing controversy on the relative desirability of general grants as opposed to grants for specific purposes (Richards, 1978, pp. 21-22).

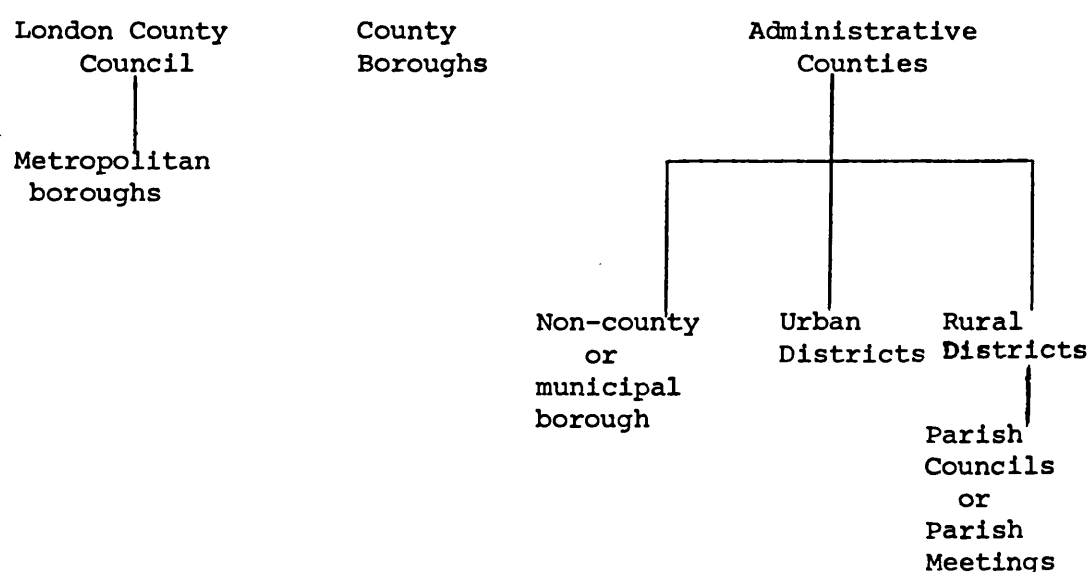
The next stage was the rationalisation of the second-tier authorities. At the time of the passing of the Local Government Act 1888, there had been some support for proposals to make more orderly the system of local government in county districts. The Local Government Act 1894 went a step further in reorganizing and simplifying the system of local government. The Act provided that urban sanitary authorities (usually these were the areas of local boards of health constituted under the Public Health Acts 1848-74) should be called urban district councils and their districts, urban districts. It also established new rural district councils, to which were transferred the duties and powers of the rural sanitary authority in the district. Both types of council were to be elected.

The Local Government Act 1899 overhauled local government administration in London by replacing numerous district boards and vestries by 28 metropolitan borough councils. It was believed that the boroughs would act as a counterweight to the London County Council as they were given responsibility for public health, housing, rating, libraries and recreational services. As Richards (1978, p. 22) says, it was not foreseen at the time that most new duties would be assigned to the county council, thus accentuating the imbalance.

The pattern of local government structure thus established was to remain for over half a century - until 1963 in London and 1974 in the remainder of England and Wales, and this is illustrated in Figure 2.1.

FIGURE 2.1:

LOCAL GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE: ENGLAND AND WALES 1899-1974  
(LONDON: 1899 - 1963)



Source: Richards, 1978, p.23

Yet the system did reflect the political, social and economic realities of the late 19th century. At that time, it was still meaningful to distinguish between town and country, and it was created before it was possible to foresee the many stresses and strains that 20th century strains would bring; the 1888 local government system was created before the invention of the motor car; the introduction of universal suffrage in Britain (1928-), and the creation of the welfare state and the rise of a social democratic party essentially concerned with representing (at least organised) working-class interests.

Some of the rapid changes which overtook the new local government system shortly after its introduction and before its main revisions in 1929

can be seen from the following data. The population of England and Wales was increasing at a considerable rate, rising from 26 million in 1881 to 38 million in 1921 - an increase of 46 per cent in 40 years. This increase was not distributed evenly throughout the country and was concentrated primarily in the towns which extended into the surrounding countryside. These developments undermined local authority boundaries and caused conflict between urban and rural authorities, as the majority of rural district councils and county councils were opposed to town boundary extensions and the conferment of county borough status. Between 1889 and 1925 there were 109 extensions of county borough areas and an increase in the number of county boroughs from 61 to 82, involving a combined loss to the counties of 350,000 acres, 3 million population and £14½ million in rateable value (Seeley, 1978, p.11).

Furthermore, the movement of population from the rural to urban areas continued, as the urban percentage of the population rose from 57 per cent in 1891 to 67 per cent in 1921. Unknown at the time of the 1888 Act, there were over a million road vehicles licensed by 1930. Also unknown in 1888 was the Labour Party: by 1929 it was in its second period of office, and its concern with social welfare was beginning to make itself felt, perhaps more strongly in the housing and planning fields.

The 1929 Act contained a number of important provisions, of which one was the abolition of the only remaining ad hoc authority - the Guardians of the Poor. Their functions (poor law, registration and hospital service) were transferred to the county councils and county borough councils. Another aim was to improve the condition of roads in county areas to keep pace with the increasing number of vehicles by transferring the highway powers of rural districts to the county councils. Towns with a population exceeding 20,000 could claim highway powers over county roads within their boundaries and all urban authorities retained

responsibility for minor or unclassified roads. Rural districts and towns with less than 20,000 population could be given delegated powers over county roads in their areas but this did not operate very satisfactorily and diminished over time. Richards (1978,p.30) thinks that there is a strong case for confining highway activities to the larger authorities with the necessary technical expertise and resources.

The Act also recognised the need for regional planning over wide areas than those of individual local authority units. It empowered county councils to act jointly with other authorities in the preparation or adoption of town planning schemes.

However, the reforms of 1929 were initiated not so much by the need to cope with the aforementioned changes as by a crisis in another area, namely, the finance of local government. The 1888 Act had attempted a separation between local and national finance, but the ever-increasing scope of local government activity in the 20th century ensured that such a separation could not be achieved (Jones,1969a, pp.165-82). Central government found it necessary to give ever-increasing grants to finance the new services, whilst on the other hand, local authorities found that taxes (rates) provided an ever-diminishing part of the revenue they required. Financial reforms were required for three reasons: to meet part of the cost of the new and expanding services provided by local government; to enable the centre to supervise services expected to reach a certain minimum standard everywhere; and to correct inequalities in the burden of local taxes between different individuals and areas. To a certain extent, it was felt at the time that all these goals could be achieved by replacing the many individual grants in aid by a block grant, and by the exclusion of agricultural and industrial land from local taxes, steps taken to ameliorate the problems of the Depression of the late 20s and 30s. As a result of the 1929 Act, however, the new grants generally

increased the already apparent tendency for the central departments to exercise a general control over the work of local government.

Between 1929 and 1974, there were numerous Acts which, together with government committees, boundary commissioners and even Royal Commissions, attempted to ensure that the structure of local government could continue both to cope with the problems with which it was faced, as well as providing the various services required and demanded of it. Examples of important legislation which increased the scope of local government activity include the 1944 Education Act, the Town and Country Planning Act of 1947, as well as many Housing Acts. Local government has also lost some functions to central government. Some - such as the Poor Law (1934-47), most civil airports (1945), electricity (1947), gas (1948) and more recently water (1974) - have been transferred to public corporations. Others - such as trunk roads (1936 and 1946), hospitals (1947), and most remaining local health services (1974) - have been transferred to central government. The administration of these last has not been transferred to centrally located Whitehall departments or to their inspectorates. New local agencies with some discretion have been appointed - in these cases the divisional road engineers, the road construction units and the regional hospital boards.

Moreover, numerous bodies have been appointed which it has recently become common to call QUANGOS, quasi-autonomous, non-governmental organisations. Many of them are also local - from some of the oldest, such as employment exchanges, through to consumers' committees and advisory committees of all kinds - and some such as the area health authorities have several members nominated by local authorities.

All these legislations and changes took place without a fundamental review and change in the organizational and areal basis of local government until 1974. As Goldsmith correctly says,



what has happened to English local government since 1888 is that it has become delocalised. In other words, a number of changes have posed problems for the structure of local self-government laid down by the 1888 Act, causing adaptations which have fundamentally shifted the emphasis away from democratic criteria and the locality, towards efficiency ones and the centre. These changes have been both national and local, as well as reflecting political, social and economic changes in the country (Goldsmith,1979,p.15).

It is an examination of these changes that we now turn, for an understanding of them is essential to an understanding of the need to reform local government.

## CHAPTER THREE

DIAGNOSIS: SOCIO-ECONOMIC FACTORS AFFECTING THE NEED  
FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM

## INTRODUCTION

The careful student of history must seek the explanation of the forms and changes of political institutions in the social and economic forces that determine them (Turner, 1920, p. 243).

We have said that the awareness of administrative reform arises with the realization that the present organizational set-up is unable to meet its obligations adequately; when a particular administrative system cannot keep in pace with development and fails to make necessary adjustments to socio-economic and political changes over a period of time. As a result, its components become maladjusted. We also identified a number of factors which will push for major structural reforms to rectify the defects in the existing administrative system. These factors include the following: growth in size and type of the clientele served such as substantial increase in population and urbanization; changes in problems, needs and demands of the people, (result of) new technology, new equipment and advancing knowledge; changing and usually rising qualifications of personnel and basic policy changes at top level. We shall be dealing with all these factors under two broad headings - SOCIO-ECONOMIC, and POLITICAL changes. These changes which were taking place while the structure of local government remained relatively stable, led to increased load (functions and responsibilities) on local government without a corresponding increase in capacity (performance), and therefore the defects and criticisms which were levied on local government in Nigeria and Britain (see Chapter 5).

First of all, we will formulate here a conceptual framework which will enable us to interpret the changing structure of society, generating demands for new structures of local government in both countries. This

framework will go a long way to help in answering our question:

Was reform necessary because the administration could not keep abreast of development? Our perspective is shaped by the systems analytic perspective associated with David Easton (1965), which provides a useful theoretical framework with which to interpret the background to local government reform. We will now be in a position to define local government as a system which resides in and responds to socio-economic and political changes. Thus, the changing structure of local government can be seen as a series of 'system responses' to environmental changes, responses which are partly regime changes (e.g. the spread of partisan local government); partly authority changes (e.g. the advent of the military in Nigerian politics or the rise of public persons as local political leaders); and partly system changes (e.g. reform in organization and function).

But, as we shall see, local government reform cannot be simply interpreted as responses to the forces of socio-economic and political changes, for to do so is to ignore the role of the reformer, Dahl's homo politicus (Dahl, 1961, pp. 223-8). The actions of the reformers will be determined by their perception of their environment and environmental changes.

Thus, the problems of 'administrative systems' and 'administrative reform' will be approached within the framework of General Systems Theory, at a macro-analytical level which recognises that:

- (a) policy formation is as much a key factor in determining the output of public policy - represented by bureaucratic performance - as is policy execution; and
- (b) (local government) bureaucracy is a sub-system of the larger society, and the ability of the bureaucratic system to pursue its goals - that is, its capacity - is determined by two factors: its external links with

the environment and its internal orientation. What we want to demonstrate is that national goals, viewed either in terms of their stationary condition at a fixed point of time or in terms of their dynamic elements, represent the load on the bureaucratic system, and that the capacity of the bureaucratic system to support its load is determined by the links it maintains with the external environment as well as by its internal basic environment or orientation. The need to reform the local government systems in Nigeria and Britain arose because the load (input) has multiplied due to socio-economic and political changes while the capacity (output) has not kept abreast of these changes.

Societies the world over are caught in a situation that demands wholesale changes in their organizational structures and social dynamics in order to deal with the new complex technological, economic, and political relationships. The reform of local government (Nigeria: 1976; England and Wales: 1974) became necessary because previous reform attempts since 1945 were not successful. That is not to say that it was only after 1945 that reformers and critics of local government in both countries started feeling the discrepancy between the ideal and reality, that is, that local administration was not keeping abreast of developments. Criticisms of local government and the need for reform go much farther back. But the demand for reform, which culminated in the 1976 and 1974 reforms in Nigeria and Britain respectively, became more articulate and enunciative after the Second World War and especially in the sixties. We shall therefore concentrate on post-war reform efforts.

In order to adequately analyse the 'defects' of local government in Nigeria and Britain, we need to catch the dynamics of social, political and economic changes that have occurred in both countries. There are differences between the two countries and they (the differences)

are rooted in the social environment, in the historical traditions and conventions which underpin each system, in the peoples, in the political and economic setting, and in the institutional arrangements of each country. It is on the variety, complexity and intensity of these differences and changes that our analysis of the formulation of reform objectives and other subsequent observations and assertions will depend. But first we will give a brief catalogue of the ailments and pressures confronting local government in both countries; we will deal with them in much greater detail in chapter 5.

Despite the huge gap in development between Nigeria and Britain, and the aforementioned differences (see chapter 1), it is interesting that both of them should have so many problems in common; and both of them were obsessed with the need to reform local government. Both countries felt that the local government system was not working well; that it was undemocratic, which is argued to be related to the low level of voting in local elections. It is also said that they were undemocratic because of the lack of control by the locally elected representatives over the bureaucracy. Elected officials themselves are said to be drawn disproportionately from better educated middle-class men or, in Nigeria's case, from illiterates. It was also asserted that they were undemocratic because of the degree of internal democracy within the local authorities, their insensitivity to local demands and their institutional responses to the challenge of participation.

Both systems of local government have been put under severe pressure because of sweeping demographical changes, population mobility - rapid movement from rural to urban areas in Nigeria and Britain (urbanization), and in Britain's case, suburbanization, that is, the city spread and decaying city centres. Added to these is the growing awareness that large industrial and commercial centres can no

longer be planned or serviced in isolation from the surrounding rural or semi-rural areas and vice-versa.

Another major problem which local government in both countries faced was the erosion of their autonomy. Increasing State intervention, the need for national planning agencies, and the secular egalitarian trend involving the demand for minimum standards in performance, were some of the pressures pushing in a centralist direction. Certainly central control is real, and is manifested in the plethora of circulars and advice that flood the offices of local authorities. Central control can be in many guises - political, administrative, legislative, technical and financial. It is the financial which is often resented, since local government dependence is more than evident: two-thirds of British local government fund expenditure come from central government in the form of grants. This is even higher in Nigeria, with the Federal and State Governments providing about four-fifths of local government expenditure.

Finally, both local government systems faced growing problems about their efficiency - and at two levels: both in their relations with the centre and within local government structures, real problems of duplication and co-ordination have emerged. Added to these is the point of corruption and nepotism in the Nigerian system. Moreover, small local authorities are said to be too weak in financial resources and trained personnel to provide proper services and adequate administration. Only in a few cases can they establish or maintain such costly institutions as hospitals and secondary schools unaided. As we said earlier, we shall deal with these problems in greater details later.

However, although local authorities in both countries have certain problems in common, their causes of, and conditions for reform differ in many respects. Modernizing, secularizing and (sub) urbanizing trends have long been noticeable in Britain. Increased social

mobility, coinciding with technical progress, mechanization and rapidly improving communications, has considerably enlarged the scale of almost every aspect of human life. During the last few decades, in particular, social and economic development has accelerated in pace.

Metropolitan areas with their highly fragmented structures have understandably long been a matter of concern, but the raison d'être of the small districts in rural areas was moreover being increasingly contested. More recently, growing recognition of the need for physical, economic and even comprehensive planning has given new dimensions to the local government issue in Britain. Planning stresses the necessity for progressive and integrated policy making and large-scale territorial frameworks for government and administration suitable for carrying out this task. The reduction in the number of local authorities (from about, 1500 to about 400) is indicative of current thought in this respect.

On the other hand, Nigeria, at the threshold of a new era, has undergone an even more tumultuous process. Not only did she demonstrate a natural inclination by breaking with the colonial system of administration, but she has also introduced new structures, as a result of changed socio-economic and especially political conditions. Moreover, the new orientation towards social and economic development has placed many new tasks on the shoulders of local government; this has been further aggravated by the frequent lack of any well-organized indigenous private sector in the economic and social field, and therefore the panacea, reform.

In Nigeria, scale-enlargement has not been the primary cause to stimulate local government reform, although it has been a secondary factor, notably in western Nigeria. Efforts in this direction have placed major emphasis on the political reliability of the system for

enhanced national unity and stability, and on the contribution it can make to social and economic development, and on increased popular participation in public decision-making and action.

In concluding this introduction we can say that a local government system, particularly when it has developed gradually and is more or less the outcome of natural growth, does not function autonomously within the national system of government and the national community. A system is sometimes rooted in the distant past, like the British, but even if it is created by the government as a bold act of innovation, like the Nigerian system, it is subsequently moulded and re-shaped by the society in which it operates, influenced by numerous forces which condition its nature, operation and form. In the terminology of the modern social sciences, local government is a system that functions together with other systems within a larger system, and all these systems interact on each other.

Local government machineries in Britain and Nigeria lagged behind socio-economic and political changes; systems of local government and administration, in particular, became obsolete and thus unsuited to modern conditions and present and future needs. The point we are making is that the 'defects' of the British and the Nigerian local government systems, and therefore the needs for their reform, were a product of the social, economic and political changes which both countries witnessed. These changes stretched the local government structure beyond what it could take, thus the discrepancy between LOAD (functions and responsibilities or input) and CAPACITY (performance or output), and this created problems for local government administration.

In order, therefore, to fully comprehend the criticisms levied on local government in both countries, it is necessary first of all to discuss the changes which have occurred in the society. Thus, we shall



try to conceptualize the interplay of forces between load and capacity vis-a-vis the criticisms that were levied on local government. As we have said above, local government does not exist in a vacuum but that it is a sub-system of a larger society and to which it must respond. Therefore, any changes in the society will rebound on local government. We will classify the societal changes which a local government must respond to as: SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL CHANGES.

#### SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHANGE

Little is still known of the pre-twentieth century social and economic life of Nigeria. We do know, however, that the Hausa /Fulani peoples engaged in extensive trading activities across the Sahara Desert for hundreds of years; and that Kano was one of the few major trans-Saharan trade centres. On the other hand, the peoples of the south, particularly the Ibos and Yorubas, traded with Europe for more than two centuries, participating at first in the slave trade, and after its abolition, in the trade in palm produce. There is also evidence that despite the difficulties imposed by dense vegetation and difficult terrain, especially in the south, there existed internal trade. Exchange, division of labour and even the use of a monetary standard were well established in many parts of the country. Food and other subsistence items were produced simply: the hoe was the most significant instrument of cultivation and beasts of burden and head portage were the means of transportation.

The appearance of European trading firms in the 19th century, and missionaries sowing new ideas and bringing education, and later an externally imposed government began to produce important structural change in the economy of Nigeria. Most important of all was the offering by traders of rewards for the sale of particular crops which

were in demand abroad - principally palm oil and palm kernels, and later cocoa, rubber, and groundnuts. Though there were no European plantations, production being done by peasant farmers on tiny parcels of land, the new incentives offered by the Europeans led to increased agricultural production for export. In the 20th century new cash crops such as cotton, rubber, cocoa and groundnuts brought more and more peasants into contact with the world market and with outside ideas. This contact helped in awakening a nationalist spirit, including the demand for democratic local government as we shall see later. Thus, the system of local government through native authorities remained relatively static for almost half a century until the early fifties, while the following changes were taking place in the society:

- (a) the monetization of the economy and the linking of the economy with the world market;
- (b) the introduction of new agricultural commodities such as cocoa, and the valorization of existing ones such as palm produce. The money made from these crops afforded farmers some leisure and some of the farmers could now devote more of their attention to local government affairs;
- (c) the introduction of medicine and new drugs which lowered the death rate and consequently led to a population explosion and urbanization;
- (d) the introduction of Western education and the training of medium-level personnel especially of white-collar clerical workers;
- (e) the introduction of new technology such as the construction of a rudimentary albeit important railway network between 1895 and 1927, and the introduction of motor cars which inevitably meant that roads must be built and maintained; and
- (f) the establishment of a few new towns to facilitate closer spatial integration of the economy.

All these changes, which we discuss in some detail below, and especially

improved transportation, led to quicker dissemination of ideas, and the changes had a serious impact on the structure of local administration in later life.

The pre-1974 British local government structure on the other hand, was still based essentially on the Acts of 1888 and 1894 whose major premise was that town and country were separate and required a separate structure to deal with the differing problems they faced. Since then, the process of continuing urbanization and industrialization has made that separation meaningless as the process of increasing social and economic inter-dependence overwhelmed the existing local boundaries. New technology, such as the introduction of motor vehicles, added to the functions of local government since, for example, they had to provide and maintain roads. Improved educational facilities led to increased better qualified personnel some of whom chose to work with local authorities. Despite governmental attempts at containing urban England, nothing could stop the process of suburbanization and the flight of industry out of the city. We can gain an insight into the scale of these changes using the following indicators:

#### Increase in Population

In 1871 the population of England and Wales was about twenty-three million. It had risen to thirty-two million in 1901, forty million in 1931, forty-six million in 1961 and reaching sixty million in the early 1970s. Nigeria also experienced a tremendous increase in her population which was nineteen million in 1931 but rose to thirty million in 1953 and by 1975 there were over seventy million Nigerians. The expansion of population in Nigeria and Britain was not distributed evenly throughout the countries. In fact, the vital factor in the population explosion has been the increase in the urban proportions of the population, particularly in towns between 50,000 and 200,000 people. In 1901 there were 61 of these towns, housing 22 per cent of the

population of England and Wales. By 1961 there were 162 of such towns and they housed 38 per cent of the population. 77 per cent of the population now live in such urban towns, as against 57 per cent in 1891 and 67 per cent in 1921. 40 per cent of the population live in the six major metropolitan areas, though this proportion is declining as people continue to leave the major cities.

Urbanization in Nigeria, on the other hand, was given a strong stimulus by the British conquest of the country. The wage employment offered by the government and by commercial firms tended to be concentrated in particular spots. Centres of administration requiring Nigerian employees were needed for the effective political control of the country and about them were clustered what few modern amenities there were. At the same time with the growth of the export and import trade, centres for collection of produce and distribution of imported merchandise were set up at key ports and at strategic points on the main transportation routes. With the railway came the further need for concentration of services and fueling facilities. Thus to the already existing urban centres, the importance of some of which increased immensely, there were added new ones - Kaduna, Jos, Port Harcourt, Enugu, Gusau, Onitsha and Aba, to mention a few. In these towns were concentrated the schools, the sanitary systems, the hospitals, and sometimes electric power. To the attractions offered to rural dwellers in the forms of wage employment prospects or small-scale business opportunities there was added that of enjoyment of these other amenities and services. Nigerians were attracted by the 'gleam' and they flowed freely into the urban centres without recruitment, compulsion, or assistance (see Table 3.1); the cities thus grew in the same way as export production - through local responses to economic (and other) incentives. What evidence there is points to tremendous increased

urbanization. There were about 0.8 million people living in urban towns of 50,000 or more in 1921. The figure rose to 1.4 millions in 1931. Despite this 5.8 per cent rate of growth, 'urban' population, thus defined, was by this time still only 7 per cent of the estimated total. According to the 1952-54 census, this figure had risen to 11 per cent and has more than doubled by 1975.

TABLE 3.1

POPULATION OF PRINCIPAL URBAN CENTRES IN NIGERIA.

| TOWNS         | 1911    | 1921    | 1931    | 1953    | 1975*     |
|---------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|-----------|
| Ibadan        | 175,000 | 238,094 | 387,133 | 459,196 | 847,000   |
| Lagos         | 73,766  | 99,690  | 126,108 | 267,407 | 1,060,848 |
| Ogbomosho     | 80,000  | 84,860  | 86,744  | 139,535 | 432,000   |
| Oyo           | 45,432  | 46,356  | 48,733  | 72,133  | 152,000   |
| Benin City    | n.a.    | n.a.    | n.a.    | 53,753  | 136,000   |
| Iwo           | 60,000  | 53,588  | 57,191  | 100,006 | 214,000   |
| Ilorin        | 36,342  | 38,668  | 47,412  | 48,999  | 282,000   |
| Kano          | n.a.    | 49,938  | 97,031  | 130,173 | 399,000   |
| Zaria         | n.a.    | 25,000  | 28,000  | 53,974  | 224,000   |
| Kaduna        | n.a.    | 5,428   | 10,628  | 38,794  | 202,000   |
| Jos           | n.a.    | 2,000   | 2,476   | 38,527  | 90,402    |
| Enugu         | n.a.    | 3,170   | 12,959  | 62,764  | 187,000   |
| Aba           | n.a.    | 2,327   | 12,958  | 57,787  | 177,000   |
| Port Harcourt | n.a.    | 7,185   | 15,201  | 71,632  | 242,000   |
| Calabar       | n.a.    | 15,438  | 16,958  | 46,705  | 176,000   |
| Maiduguri     | n.a.    | 16,274  | 24,359  | 54,646  | 189,000   |
| Onitsha       | n.a.    | 10,319  | 18,084  | 76,921  | 220,000   |
| Ede           | 26,577  | 48,360  | 52,392  | 44,808  | 182,000   |

Note: n.a. = Exact number not known.

Sources: Coleman, 1958, p.74; and \*1975 figures, Africa South of the Sahara, 1979, p.748.

Population increase and mobility have led to certain problems for local government. The urban areas, and particularly the larger towns, needed room in which to accommodate their increasing numbers; the rural areas, alarmed at the departure of local taxpayers opposed any extension of the urban boundaries and the consequent declining revenues. In Britain, they were opposed to the creation of new county boroughs which had the same effects, since it removed the areas of authorities promoted to that status from the jurisdiction of the county authority. In short, the conflict between town and country - between county borough council and county council - arose because areas of local government did not adequately change to meet the conditions created by drifts of industry and population. Furthermore, owner occupation in England and Wales reached over 50 per cent in the early 1970s, whilst the supply of privately rented accommodation had dwindled to some 15 per cent: as a consequence, the rental market is supplied by municipal housing, with over a third of the total housing stock falling into this category.

Urbanization and industrialization in Nigeria also involved continuous differentiation in the institutional structure of the society, as well as changes in the social, economic and psychological commitments of people. In other words, considerable social mobility led to calls for changes in local government structure to meet the demands of the increasing clientele. Social mobility also diminished the cleavage between the town and its surrounding rural areas. This further made nonsense of the structure of local government. And in the realm of politics, increasing urbanization effected a new political role for the urban worker and the expanding middle class. Thus, as modernization progresses, popular political involvement tends to be

enhanced and traditional political loyalties eroded. Concomitant with this, different interest groups arise, or are aroused, and the growing mass of enfranchised citizens will increasingly leave their imprint on the political process. The implications of social mobilization for political development are understandably far-reaching, because a change in the quality of politics occurs by virtue of changes in the range of the human needs which impinge upon the political process. The transformation of social needs on a large scale - particularly in areas such as housing, employment, social security, municipal services, medical care, and so forth - creates impossible demands on local governments whose administrative and resource capacities have not adapted or kept pace with growing and divergent needs of a modernizing population. Thus, rural-urban drift brought with it changes (social, political and economic) and problems. Greater mobility of the population and the weakening of the extended family linkages brought new demands upon the local authorities to assist the individual who fell into need. The tempo and character of the changes created situations and attitudes that have predisposed many Nigerians to nationalist activity and increased demands from the government after independence. The cities and towns became not only melting pots, but the breeding and training grounds, as well as the arenas, of Nigerian nationalism; and later for the demand for a democratic and efficient local government to cater for their needs.

#### Advances in Medicine

The increase in population of both countries was due, in great part, to a check upon the death rate by the advances made in medicine. From the beginning of the 18th century (Nigeria: 20th century), the medical profession had moved, at an accelerating pace, out of the

darkness of superstition into the light of science. A connection had been established between dirt and disease, and some attention was given to providing clean water, sewers, drainage, and to removing offensive trades and nuisances.

Later, in the 19th century Britain, it was thought likely that every individual was a possible menace to public health, since he could harbour germs on his body, in his clothing, and in his home. Every person came to be regarded as a possible spreader of diseases who, if not supervised and treated, could affect the whole nation. Local authorities came to pay more attention to personal health services in accordance with minimum scientific standards under greater central supervision.

Since the Second World War there have been significant improvements in environmental sanitation, the inspection of the food supply, maternity and child welfare, the supervision of midwives, the treatment of infectious diseases, and modern medical aids have been increasingly introduced in Nigeria too. These, such as the introduction of quinine to cure malaria, have had effects on the death rate and hence on the population growth rate (see Table 3.2). The population explosion means in effect that the local government authorities have had to provide and maintain dispensaries, maternity centres, housing, social security and amenities for the masses. As a consequence they became important sources of employment. The local authorities did not respond adequately to these changes and responsibilities and because they lacked the necessary funds and trained personnel, they became inefficient and ineffective.



TABLE 3.2: BIRTH AND DEATH RATE IN NIGERIA

| YEAR    | PER THOUSAND |             |
|---------|--------------|-------------|
|         | BIRTH RATE   | DEATH RATE" |
| 1900    | n.a.         | 430*        |
| 1929    | n.a.         | 134*        |
| 1965-70 | 49.6         | 24          |
| 1970-75 | 49.3         | 22          |

Note: \*These figures represent the rate of infant mortality in Lagos, but they are representative.

Sources: Africa South of the Sahara, UN, 1979; Census of Nigeria, 1931, Vol. 1, appendix 1, pp.125-30; Dr.J.G.S.Turner, "Notes on the Medical History of Lagos", Vols.11 & VI, Lagos, 1933.

#### Expansion of Educational Facilities

Before 1870, the provision of education in Britain had been in the hands of various voluntary bodies, assisted by State grants. The Education Act 1870 authorised local school boards (ad hoc bodies) to provide schools where voluntary provision was not adequate.

The Education Act 1902 abolished the school boards and transferred their powers to county councils and county borough councils. The larger non-county borough councils and urban district councils were to be the authorities for elementary education only. This new and costly service was operated only by the largest local government units. The provision of higher education was restricted to county councils and county borough councils, since smaller authorities could neither provide such a service nor make adequate use of it.

In Nigeria, perhaps the most significant inheritance from the colonial masters was the introduction of Western education, usually by missionaries. Schools were built in many areas which had hitherto seen nothing like that, although their influence remained concentrated,

of course, upon the main centres of administration. The shift of emphasis to education in the government expenditure after 1951 had a very significant socio-economic and political impact on the society. Not only did the provision of educational facilities add to the burden of local government and therefore its ineffectiveness, but education per se changed the type and quality of local government clientele and inevitably the demands of the clientele.

In the Western Region, primary education became free in 1955 and the number of admissions expanded rapidly in most of the others. Openings for secondary schools also increased rapidly whilst the number of university entrants was substantially higher. From less than a million students in institutions of various kinds in 1950, the figure rose to over three million within fifteen years. This tremendous expansion of education facilities in Nigeria has continued, with education receiving the highest priority in the Federal Government budget estimates since 1978. We shall see in the next sub-section how education siphoned the already inadequate resources of local government in Nigeria. Table 3.3 tells all the story of the rapid change in education since 1938.

**TABLE 3.3: EXPANSION OF EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES IN NIGERIA**

| NUMBER OF STUDENTS ENROLLED |                     |                      |            |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|------------|
| YEAR                        | SECONDARY EDUCATION | TECHNICAL/VOCATIONAL | UNIVERSITY |
| 1938                        | 5,400               | -                    | 60         |
| 1950                        | 21,400              | 1,300                | 300        |
| 1955                        | 39,500              | 2,600                | 900        |
| 1960                        | 135,400             | 4,700                | 2,700      |
| 1971                        | 343,313             | 15,590               | 14,371     |
| 1973                        | 448,904             | 22,588               | 23,173     |
| 1975-80                     | 1,555,180           | 117,686              | 53,000     |

Sources: UNESCO, Statistical Yearbook, 1967;  
Legum, 1977, p.674.

In Britain all education other than university education has been a local authority responsibility since 1902, and the division as between secondary and primary was at one time between the county and county borough councils on the one hand and certain district councils on the other. This ceased with the Education Act 1944, in the belief that it is wrong educationally and administratively for responsibility for a child's education to be split half way through his school career. In contrast, in Nigeria where education is the overriding interest of all classes of the community, the native authorities of colonial days and the local authorities that succeeded them have shown their eagerness to build primary schools and their willingness to make sacrifices to do so. Thus there has emerged the administrative pattern of divided responsibility that had been discredited in the British Act of 1944 - the local authority primary school and the government secondary.

The expansion of education (and enfranchisement) in Nigeria and Britain led, as we shall expand later, to increased political awareness and participation, to increased qualified specialist personnel working with the local authorities (though less so in Nigeria) and also to increased demands for institutional reforms both at the national and local levels. As Wraith puts it, "it is part of a natural process that as education and prosperity become more widespread people demand, and are capable of exercising, an increasing share of responsibility in administering local affairs..." (1972,p.21).

#### Increased Local Government Functions

It is not possible to lay down any precise responsibility between central and local government, because there is no infallible test of principle by which to determine what particular duties should be assigned to either of them. There is no class of duties which, from

the purely constitutional point of view, it will be improper to entrust to local authorities. But in the course of history, responsibilities have been distributed between central and local administrations in an almost infinite variety of ways. Regards have always, however, been had to the fact that the society is not static, but in a state of flux. Changes are bound to occur and emphases are bound also to be different at different stages of development. It suffices, therefore, without reference to theory, to accept the fact that there are certain functions which, it is either essential or desirable for the government to perform, and that there are certain functions which are essentially suited for performance by the local authorities.

We must remember that Britain pioneered the agricultural and the industrial revolutions and they created for her unprecedented social problems, especially of destitution and disease. The central government itself had no machinery for tackling these problems. 'Local government', as it then existed, was equally incapable of solving them. Outside the boroughs (which were in any case concerned with local trade and prosperity and were extremely corrupt) local government meant the 'justices of the peace', whose main job was judicial and whose administrative functions were rudimentary. Of course, someone had to solve the social problems and the policy of the 19th century governments was to give responsibility to locally elected bodies to deal with poverty, provide basic necessities in the streets, deal with problems of sanitation and public health and later with public education (Pearce, 1980, pp.14-15).

In contrast, when comparable modern problems began to arise in the 20th century in Nigeria, Government was paternal and all-powerful and its local agents, the district officers, were supposed to solve every

problem that came along. State control, which would have been regarded in Britain at the time as unacceptable, was accepted in colonial government as normal. To get a true British-Nigerian comparison it is therefore necessary to stand history on its head. The result, in Nigeria, of superimposing the British kind of local government on what already existed was simply too much government; there was not enough for everyone to do, especially with the limited resources available, so that having created local government it was necessary to invent a purpose for it. In fact, the real purpose, in the minds of the British, had been political education, as a preparation for self-government, and in the minds of the Nigerian politicians the diminution of the power of the chiefs.

The point we are making is that such functions as the building and maintenance of roads, public works, schools, dispensaries, housing, transport, traffic and amenities, which usually should be reserved for local government were performed by the field agencies of the central government. This means that the central government was very powerful and influential since it imposed the apparatus of modernization from above upon people who took very little active part in it. These field agencies which were "essential when things had to be done for people, came to be something of an obstacle when the time came for things to be done by people. In other words it is now difficult for local communities, coming into the picture after fifty years of departmental government, to find their feet, since the knowledge, the skill, the equipment and the money are so largely concentrated in central government hands" (Wraith, 1972, p.44). The result has been that administrative, professional and technical competence have been unduly concentrated in the central government service, at the expense of local government, and this made local government, even with their

limited functions, ineffective and inefficient.

Before the reform of 1974 in Britain, one could define the functions of local government as follows: the environmental, the protective and the social. This analysis has now become obsolete. Contemporary problems of the 'environment' such as communication have become primarily national. The protective services included the police whose staffing and administration now largely ignore local government administrative boundaries; and one of the most important of the social services, hospitals, was taken away from local government about 30 years ago. We shall return to this point - the loss of functions - shortly.

In Nigeria much of this was meaningless because, as we said earlier on, most of these functions were performed by the central government. Apart from law and order, only public sanitation could be said to be the responsibility of local communities. The unromantic subjects of refuse, sewage, drains, public cleansing, pure water, and pest and disease control have been the foundation of local government everywhere. Almost everything else is a matter of argument, so far as its administrative setting is concerned. We should now, however, go into some details about the growth of local government functions.

One matter in which local authorities in Nigeria have differed from the British, and more closely resembled the French, is in their general responsibility for law and order. They have, of course, specific powers to deal with natural nuisances such as fires and man-made nuisances such as brothels, gambling, begging, hawking and noise. But there has always been in addition a general duty laid upon all local authorities, which cannot be listed as a specific function or defined with any precision; that is the duty generally to assist in maintaining law and good government. This duty has grown increasingly important today. The law lays it down that local authorities shall not only

perform the duties imposed on them by the law, but must generally maintain order in their areas. In this respect it is the duty of the local authorities to interpose for the purpose of preventing, and to the best of their ability prevent, the commission of any offence by anybody within the area of the council.

In view of the great stress laid on the importance of this duty, the law contained provisions permitting the councils to maintain their own local police force and prisons. The importance laid on the maintenance of law and order can probably be attributed to local government's inheritance of some of the roles played by traditional authorities in the past, when no other government agency possessed the necessary information and organization at the local level. The provision for local authorities to maintain law and order was described as the Native Authority's main raison d'être and obligation to the Regional Government and to the community it serves (Campbell, 1963). The added burden of maintaining a police force and prisons was necessary in view of the fact that the 'native authority' was almost synonymous with the 'native court'.

One other, if not the most important duty performed by the local authorities, is the provision of medical and health facilities. Here, the responsibility was shared between the councils and the central government. Local authorities played and still play a prominent part in the sanitation of their areas. This 'welfare' category of functions became vast as new services were added, and the tasks of health inspectors increased. They include the inspection of houses, and abatement of nuisance; inspection of animals or meat for the purposes of determining whether they are fit for human consumption; inspection of buildings with a view to detecting whether they are dilapidated or ill-ventilated in such a way as to constitute danger to the lives of the inhabitants.

They vaccinate people against smallpox or cholera and carry out routine inspection of bakeries, waterworks, eating houses etc. to see that they are constantly maintained in a perfect sanitary condition.

Education later became an important function of local government, as we mentioned before. Local authorities were empowered to build, equip and maintain schools. Most of the primary schools in the Eastern Region prior to independence were owned and managed by voluntary agencies and missions, but they relied on the councils for a proportion of their recurrent costs. In the north, native authorities contributed immensely to building and maintaining schools. The Northern Regional Government on its part appreciated this great task and encouraged the native authorities to improve the existing educational facilities by giving them capital grants towards meeting the costs, and by making a recurrent grant for the payment of teachers' salaries in grant-aided schools. The native authorities also ran a number of secondary schools.

Another function which became devolved on local government was the provision of a public works. This department, usually with an engineer as the head, was responsible for the building and repair of roads and bridges which were under the council's jurisdiction. A number of the wealthy local authorities provided public utilities, such as street lights. The provision and improvement of markets, abattoirs, motor parks, were all among the important functions of local government.

It must be mentioned also that the councils were empowered to take part in trade or commerce. Wealthy councils like Lagos City Council and Enugu Urban County Council operated public passengers' transport, but these in themselves were poorly organized and ineffective. In the Northern Region, the Government established the Native Authorities Housing Corporation in 1963 to stimulate business interest of the native authorities.



Although the responsibilities of local government remained in the established realms of sanitation, minor works, law and order and primary education, increasingly the view came to be held that rural local government is meaningless unless it is assisting in economic development - creating wealth which in the more distant future may yield the tax revenue from which social services can ultimately be financed. In Nigeria there is some confusion as to what constitutes 'development'. Often the word is construed to mean anything that was not there before, irrespective of whether it is revenue-earning or a liability on existing revenues. Unfortunately the most popular forms of development - schools and health centres - are a heavy recurrent liability especially in view of the pitifully inadequate human and financial resources, and produce no immediate return; their return lies in the improved health and education of the next generation. Markets and abattoirs are other popular projects which pay their way as public utilities but cannot be said to add to wealth. The kind of developments which are most likely to produce returns in a near future are unfortunately the least popular - investment in improved agriculture, fisheries, drainage and irrigation, and village industry (Wraith, 1972, pp. 38-9).

This contrasts with Britain where the idea of economic development as an aim of local government is alien. Agricultural or industrial, it is largely in the sphere of competitive private enterprise. The State may play a regulatory role or may be responsible for a number of nationalised industries, which are either natural monopolies or public utilities. But local authorities play no direct role at all. The most that could be said about local authorities in Britain is that they may sometimes provide the basic opportunities, such as land for factories or river frontage for docks and wharves, and the public services to support them; but actual development is not their affair. Their

business is to collect rates and with the help of central government to provide public works, transport, markets and a wide range of amenities and social services.

We have mentioned the losses and gains made by local government in Britain between 1888 and 1974 (see Chapter 2). During this period there was a radical extension in the range and quality of the services provided by local authorities. Following the Education Act of 1902, a spate of social legislation, such as the Town and Country Planning Act of 1947, has required local authorities to provide a wide array of personal and environmental services, far beyond the limited protective and public health functions of the late 19th century, and has greatly widened the functional role of local government units. An unprecedented scientific, technical and communications revolution, the evolution of the concept of a Welfare State, and the need for the provision of national standards, have formed the background to these changes, providing the tools and a philosophy for local government's assumption of increased responsibility for the welfare of the population.

Changing social conditions, such as those outlined above, rendered the local government areas which were suitable for performing given functions unsuitable for their task when functions grew in scope and when new duties were made necessary by advances in living standards. There was no significant attempt to adapt areas to the requirements of the services which had been allocated to them, resulting in varying standards of service from authorities whose resources were too slender to fulfil their responsibilities. Local government structure therefore became 'ossified and anachronistic'.

There were economic changes as well. In chapter 2 we mentioned the change from an agricultural economy to an industrial one, and the problems and consequences of the change. Thus agriculture which was

the main source of employment at the time of the 1888 Act, declined seriously in later years and accelerated the movement of population from the country to the towns. This mobility, as we have noted, brought problems to local government.

Another example of the economic and functional change is the way motor industry and especially the heavy industries, have moved away from the centre of the city - Ford is at Dagenham and Halewood, and British Leyland at Longbridge and Leyland. The development of the car and the subsequent spread of car ownership has meant that long-distance commuting (up to 30 miles each way) is relatively common around most cities outside London, whilst the development of suburban rail and underground services around the latter has meant commuting journeys of up to 50 miles and more. This has given rise to what Pahl (1968,p.263) has called 'a dispersed city' around London : in twenty years, between 1951 and 1971 the outer metropolitan area of London has grown from 3,500,000 to 5,300,000.

One of the most important consequences of the growth of the dispersed city has been the impact on the old core cities, which generally have lost population and jobs. For example, Liverpool lost almost a quarter of its population between 1951 and 1971, many of them the younger and more skilled members. The much higher proportions of the semi-skilled and unskilled, of the elderly and of those who, for whatever reasons, are unable to leave the inner city, mean that the old core cities face a much higher demand for services, but also have a lower tax base on which to finance such services.

There has, however, been a missing factor in our argument, namely the size and population of the local authorities to whom it is proposed to delegate, for it is meaningless to discuss the functions of local authorities without also discussing the areas within which those

functions are to be discharged. The two are quite inseparable, and they present us with the central dilemma of local government in Nigeria and Britain, namely that there is always a conflict between efficiency, which generally tends to point to large units, and local democracy, which always tends to point to small ones. Let us now briefly unravel this complexity.

The size, and more particularly the population of a local authority determines its revenue; this in turn will determine its capability; moreover some of the functions of local authorities (e.g. sewerage and sewage disposal) can be efficiently and economically administered over a small area, whereas others, such as electricity, require a large one; as a further complication, some of those which need only a small area may come to need a larger one, as technical efficiency grows; consequently the administering authority may have to combine with others, in order to become bigger, or alternatively lose the administration of such functions altogether and allow them to be performed by a larger authority, such as the central government or a quasi-autonomous organization. A related problem is that some functions which can be discharged satisfactorily over a small area (e.g. a town) nevertheless need highly qualified staff, which a small authority cannot afford.

Thus, not only has local government in Britain and Nigeria been criticized for failing to respond adequately to socio-economic changes around them, but they have been found inefficient because of their size. Functions were devolved haphazardly, paying little attention to the sizes of local authorities, and therefore to their financial and personnel capability. We shall return to these points when we come to deal with the 'defects' of local government in Nigeria and Britain (see chapter 5).

We have said that the tremendous increase in the functions of local government led to criticisms and calls for reform since they could not

adjust adequately to meet these changes. But the other side of the coin is the loss of functions which relates to one of the criticisms of local government, namely that it was undemocratic. A local government is a semi-independent political body whose powers may in general be given or taken away at any time by legislators. Furthermore the functions of local government in both countries are generally defined in the law, that is, a local authority may do nothing unless it has been specifically authorized by the legislature. With all these changes which we have said occurred in the society, Governments came to doubt the capacity and capability of local authorities to provide vital services, and this has led to central intervention in many matters which would be considered of purely local interest in Nigeria and Britain. Other arguments for taking away local government functions include: the need for uniform and acceptable standards of services, the need for large, specialized and technical operation, and the need for high level management. Thus local government in Britain have lost the following functions: Poor Law (1934-7), most civil airports (1945), electricity (1947), gas (1948), water (1974), trunk roads (1936 and 1946) and hospitals (1947). Local governments are said to have lost their autonomy not only because of the loss of these functions, but also because of the amount of central supervision, and their huge dependence on central government finance. Again, we shall treat these things in detail when we come to discuss the 'defects' of local government.

Population explosion, population mobility and the weakening of the extended family linkages, the impact of urbanization and the universal cash economy, industrialization and the technological revolution, the evolution of the concept of a Welfare State, and the need for acceptable standards of services increased the responsibility of local government. An array of functions have, in short, been devolved on local government far beyond the limited protective and public health functions of post-war

years without a corresponding increase in their technical, financial, professional and administrative competence.

### The Growth of Communications

In Britain the size of local government units was influenced by the ease with which man could travel on foot or horse. In Nigeria the same is true of the area of jurisdiction of an Emir/Oba or his plenipotentiary. With the development of the internal combustion engine the conception of locality has changed. Technological advances such as the development of the aeroplane and telephone have 'shrunk' Nigeria and Britain and made things much easier. There were no vehicles in Britain by the time of the 1888 Act. By 1930 Britain had over a million motor vehicles and this figure rose to 12 million by 1970.

The colonial government contributed in no small way to the development of communications facilities in Nigeria. It started the railway line by 1898 and by 1932 had reached a total mileage of 2,100. It constructed harbours in Lagos and Port Harcourt and built roads. In 1914 Nigeria had 2,000 miles of roads over which motors could pass; by 1926 this total approximated 6,000 miles. By 1951 the mileage was 28,000 and by 1962 it jumped to 45,000. The number of licensed commercial vehicles rose from 7,300 in 1950 to 18,000 at the beginning of 1958, and the increase in the number of private cars during the same period was from 7,000 to 24,000. This figure jumped to over 85,000 in 1972. The number of telephone instruments installed in the country also increased rapidly from 10,500 in 1951 to 49,000 in 1962 whilst the total wire-miles rose from 38,000 to 182,000 over the same period. Tables 3.4 to 3.7 graphically portray the tremendous growth in communications in Nigeria.

TABLE 3.4: MERCHANT SHIPPING FLEET

| DISPLACEMENT<br>(gross tons) | 1973    | 1974    | 1975    | 1976    | 1977    |
|------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| "                            | 110,000 | 121,000 | 142,000 | 182,000 | 336,000 |

Source: Africa South of the Sahara, 1979, p.758.

TABLE 3.5: MOTOR VEHICLES IN USE

|                          | 1969    | 1970    | 1971    | 1972    |
|--------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Private cars, taxis etc. | 42,778  | 42,425  | 60,000  | 85,000  |
| Commercial vehicles      | 25,626  | 27,086  | 39,000  | 48,000  |
| Motor cycles             | 29,559  | 29,730  | 40,000  | 58,000  |
| Tractors                 | 478     | 459     | 800     | 1,200   |
| Trailers                 | 1,644   | 1,499   | 2,000   | 3,000'  |
| Special purpose vehicles | 182     | 396     | 420     | 500     |
| TOTAL                    | 100,267 | 101,694 | 142,220 | 195,700 |

Note: 1969 figures exclude the 3 Eastern States;  
 1970 figures exclude the Northern and East-Central States;  
 1971 and 1972 figures are estimates for the whole country.

Source: Africa South of the Sahara, 1979, p.748

TABLE 3.6: INTERNATIONAL SEA-BORNE SHIPPING

|                 |                    | 1972   | 1975    |
|-----------------|--------------------|--------|---------|
| VESSELS ENTERED | '000 NET REG. TONS | 8,824  | n.a.    |
| GOODS LOADED    | '000 METRIC TONS   | 87,588 | 100,100 |
| CRUDE PETROLEUM | " " " "            | n.a.   | 98,719  |
| GOODS UNLOADED* | " " " "            | 4,727  | 4,800   |

\* Including transshipment

Source: Africa South of the Sahara, 1979, p.758

TABLE 3.7: CIVIL AVIATION (SCHEDULED SERVICES '000)

| NIGERIAN REGISTERED AIRLINES | 1973    | 1974    | 1975    | 1976    |
|------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| KILOMETRES FLOWN             | 9,100   | 9,400   | 9,500   | 10,200  |
| PASSENGERS CARRIED           | 300     | 325     | 450     | 485     |
| PASSENGER - KILOMETRE        | 334,000 | 355,000 | 430,000 | 470,000 |
| FREIGHT TON-KILOMETRE        | 7,400   | 7,400   | 6,800   | 7,300   |
| TOTAL TON- KILOMETRE         | 38,000  | 41,000  | 49,000  | 51,000' |

Source: Africa South of the Sahara, 1979, p.758

The effect of the growth of communications in Nigeria is that it led to an increased trading radius of each producer and each village and thereby a quicker dissemination of ideas such as the demand for democratic local government, and these communications changes had serious impact on the structure of local administration in Nigeria. Increased demands from the ever-increasing clientele led to problems, such as the provision and maintenance of roads, dispensaries, housing, drainage and so forth, for local government. In a more direct way, the growth of communications had another effect on the structure of local government: it is possible for the local government official of today to know the extremities of his local government far more intimately than, for example, the rural district official of 1920 knew his district. The influence of communications on the system and structure of local government is so significant that Wraith asserts that "it is communications that are really the important geographical factor in local administration; they determine whether centralization is possible, irrespective of whether governments want it." (1972, p.32.)

Furthermore, improved transport has meant that smaller authorities have lost more and more functions to the larger ones and that large local authorities had to transfer major services to central government authorities or quasi-governmental organizations. Thus local government



structure and boundaries created by the colonial masters and only slightly changed by their Nigerian successors, and the Victorian local government boundaries in Britain became obsolete and irrelevant because of large changes in population distribution, including the rapid growth of the conurbations, improved transport facilities and the development and widespread use of motor vehicles, technological developments generally and the demand for more and improved services. We must add as an aside, however, that although all-weather roads and above all the aeroplane have diminished distance, Nigerian communications by road, rail and telephone are still indifferent by international standards, and this fact must continue to affect local government for many years to come. In the main it should tend to enhance its importance, since as a general principle the worse the communications in any given area the greater the need for decentralization through devolution. Furthermore, we are aware that there were local government changes in the early fifties in Nigeria but these were nothing but changes of name since there were complicated political motives behind them - destroying indirect rule through the chiefs (the hall-mark of colonialism), creating local machinery for national political parties, placating local interests and handing out patronage. We will deal with these things when we come to consider the political changes that occurred (see chapter 4) but suffice it to say that the changes in the fifties were not systems responses to environmental changes neither were they for efficiency reasons. The fact is that the local governments became less efficient and corrupt, and there was nothing to show that even the most rudimentary services were rendered.

The somewhat detailed analysis of socio-economic changes in Nigeria and Britain is necessary if we must see how the changes have affected the political situations. But that is just half the truth as we shall

later see. Political changes too have led to socio-economic changes. Changes in one aspect, therefore, have organic relationship with changes in other aspects. For instance, urbanization and education led to increased political awareness and consequently political changes; also, independence heralded Nigerianization and indigenization of the economy and these led to enormous socio-economic changes, changes which forced the central government to devolve more functions on local government as the former had to face other more serious functions such as foreign affairs.

We did say earlier that local government is an organism which must be affected by changes around it. In Nigeria we have deliberately painted a rosy picture of socio-economic changes. Yet, in whatever form development takes, it engenders its own problems. In the case of Nigeria, socio-economic changes led to regional inequalities, local government inefficiency and consequently accusations of tribalism, nepotism, corruption and bribery. In their classic study of Corruption in Developing Countries, Wraith and Simpkins concluded that "local government in the Southern Regions of Nigeria has reached the point of being a conspiracy against the public, so riddled is it with bribery, nepotism, politics and corruption" (1963,p.19). The majority of school leavers were drifting into the towns and fast becoming a solid unemployable community there, to provide the fodder for the political thuggery and lawlessness which appeared an increasingly commonplace feature of Nigerian political life.

In short, the seemingly rosy socio-economic development is nothing but hallucinating gleam. The common man did not benefit much. In fact, we will note that there was little in terms of socio-economic changes in the period 1960-1970 because of political wranglings. The politicians who fired the aspirations of the masses betrayed them. They gerrymandered the structure of local government and even with-held

the grants of some local authorities. The goods were not delivered, the masses became alienated and disenchanted and these plunged the country into chaos which consequently led to political changes - the creation of states and the eventual reform of local government.

Yet the dynamic aspect of these changes had not affected the basic structure of local government before the reforms of 1974 in England and Wales and 1976 in Nigeria. Local government structural and organizational changes were not commensurate with the rate of socio-economic changes. Thus what happened was that increased socio-economic activities multiplied the load (functions and responsibilities) on local government without a corresponding increase in its capacity. The net result was inefficiency and ineffectiveness. In short, there was a great deal of underspending and weak administration, resulting in considerable under-fulfilment and structural distortion. All these have led critics and reformers to describe local government as being anachronistic, undemocratic and inefficient (see chapter 5).

#### Some Implications of Socio-Economic Changes for Local Government

In whatever country it occurs, socio-economic changes bring with them an expansion of the politically relevant strata of the population. These politically relevant strata are a broader group than the elite: they include all those persons who must be taken into account in politics. Dockworkers, farmers and trade union members in Nigeria and Britain are not necessarily members of the elites of these countries, but they are quite likely to count for something in their political life. In Nigeria, as in other developing countries, the political process usually does not include the mass of isolated, subsistence-farming, tradition-bound and politically apathetic villagers, but it does include increasingly the growing members of town and city dwellers, cash-crop farmers,

wage earners, those who use the mass media, literates in town and country. The growth in the numbers (and types) of these clientele produces mounting pressures for the reform of political practices and institutions such as local government.

Socio-economic changes also bring about a change in the quality of local politics, by changing the range of human needs that impinge upon local (government) political process. As people are uprooted from their physical and intellectual isolation in their immediate localities, from their old habits and traditions, and often from their old patterns of occupation and places of residence, they experience drastic changes in their needs. They may now come to need provisions for housing and employment, for social security against illness and old age, for medical care against health hazards of their crowded urban dwellings and places of work and the risk of accidents with unfamiliar machinery. They may need succour against the risk of cyclical or seasonal unemployment, against oppressive charges of rent or interest, and against sharp fluctuations in the prices of the main commodities which they must sell or buy. They need instruction for themselves and education for their children. They need, in short, a wide range and large amount of new local government services. But local government will not be able to perform these functions effectively and efficiently unless it is reformed.

These needs ordinarily cannot be met by traditional types of local government inherited from a precommercial and pre-industrial age. Neither could these needs be met by a local government system designed in the 19th century such as in Britain. The answer to satisfy these needs can be found in local government reform.

So also, the growing need for new and old local government services usually implies persistent political pressures for an increased scope of government and a greater relative size of the government sector in the national economy. In other words, a greater scope of governmental

services and functions requires ordinarily an increase in the capabilities of local government. Usually it requires an increase in the numbers and training of local government personnel, an increase in local government offices and departments, and a significant improvement in administrative organization and efficiency. A rapid process of socio-economic change thus tends to generate major pressures for political and administrative reform.

Similar to its impact on local government, socio-economic changes tend to generate also pressures for a more general transformation of the political elite. It tends to generate pressures for a broadening and partial transformation of elite functions, of elite recruitment, and of elite communications. On all these counts, the old elites of traditional chiefs and emirs, village headmen and local notables are likely to prove ever more inadequate; and political leadership may tend to shift to the new political elite of party or quasi-party organizations, formal or informal, legal or illegal, but always led by the new 'marginal men' who have been exposed more or less thoroughly to the impact of modern education and urban life.

The increasing numbers of the mobilised population, and the greater scope and urgency of their needs for political decisions (at least at the local level) and governmental services, tend to translate themselves, albeit with a time lag, into increased political participation. This may express itself informally through greater numbers of people taking part in crowds and riots, in meetings and demonstrations, in strikes and uprisings, or, less dramatically, as members of a growing audience for political communications, written or by radio and television, or finally as members of a growing host of organizations. While many of these organizations are ostensibly non-political, such as improvement societies, study circles, agricultural and commercial associations and the like, they nevertheless tend to acquire a political tinge, particularly

in a country like Nigeria which lacks more open outlets for political activities such as those available in Britain. But even where there are established political parties and elections, as in Britain, a network of seemingly nonpolitical or marginally political organization serves an important political function by providing a dependable social setting for the individuals who have been partly or wholly uprooted or alienated from their traditional communities. Such organizations may serve at the same time as marshalling grounds for the entry of these persons into political life.

Where people have the right to vote, the effects of socio-economic change are likely to be reflected in the electoral statistics. This process finds its expression both through a tendency towards a higher voting participation of those already enfranchised and through an extension of the franchise itself to additional groups of the population. Often the increase in participation amongst those who already have the right to vote precedes the enfranchisement of new classes of voters.

Another effect of socio-economic changes is the shift of emphasis away from the parochialism of the traditional culture to a preoccupation with the supralocal but far less than world-wide unit of territorial, and eventually national state. Experiences in some of the developing countries including Nigeria suggest a more rapid rise of attention devoted to local affairs and national topics than of that given to international affairs.

The expansion of cash crops in Nigeria following the advent of the British, and especially before independence, points to another side effect of socio-economic changes in the society: social mobilisation and economic development tend to substantially increase the share of the international trade sector in the national economy. Thus, in the course of British development, the proportion of total foreign trade rose

from an average of 20 per cent in 1830-40 to about 60 per cent in 1870-79.

The problem of the ratio of the sector of internationally oriented economic activities relative to total national income - and thus indirectly the problem of the political power potential of internationally exposed or involved interest groups vis-a-vis the rest of the community - leads us to the problem of the size of states and of the scale of effective political communities, which in turn relates to local government. As we have seen the process of socio-economic changes generates strong pressures towards increasing the capabilities of government, by increasing the volume and range of demands made upon the government and administration, and by widening the scope of politics and membership of the politically relevant strata. The same process increases the frequency and the critical importance of direct communications between government and governed. It thus necessarily increases the importance of the language, the media, and the channels through which these communications are carried on. The panacea, again, lies with reforming local government institutions.

Other things assumed equal, the stage of rapid socio-economic changes may be expected, therefore, to promote the consolidation of states whose peoples already share the same language, culture and major social institutions such as Britain; while the same process may tend to strain or destroy the unity of states whose population is already divided into several groups with different languages or cultures, such as Nigeria.

In the last analysis, however, the problem of the scale of states (and also of local governments), goes beyond the effects of language, culture, or institutions, important as all these are. In the period of rapid socio-economic changes, the acceptable scale of a political unit will tend to depend eventually upon its performance. If a government

fails to meet the increasing burdens put on it by the process of socio-economic transformation, that is if capacity falls short of the load, a growing proportion of the population is likely to become alienated and disaffected from the local government. It is this failure that led local government in Nigeria and Britain to being labelled as inefficient and ineffective, and that the solution to the problems lies in reforming them. At the national level, the problems of Ireland to Britain and of Biafra to Nigeria may serve as examples. If a government proves persistently incapable and unresponsive it may be forced out of power by, say, the military. As we shall see in the case of Nigeria, the intervention of the military was to affect local government in no small way.

All these implications, and their relationships with the politics of Nigeria and Britain will be discussed in the next chapter. We shall also examine the political changes which took place in both countries and the effect of socio-economic changes on political changes and vice-versa since the latter are usually preceded or accompanied by a rise in several of the usual indicators of the former.



## CHAPTER FOUR

DIAGNOSIS: POLITICAL CHANGES AND THE CHANGING SYSTEM  
OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

## INTRODUCTION

Administrative reform is a political process designed to adjust the relationships between a bureaucracy and other elements in a society, or within the bureaucracy itself (Montgomery, 1967, p.1).

A country's decentralization system can be considered a sub-system of its political system. Political factors are consequently of major importance in determining the local government system and/or its reorganization. After all local government draws its legal and constitutional authority from the Government. Moreover, the fact that national unity is frequently one of the principal objectives of the decentralization policy indicates the highly political nature of the decision on the system to be introduced. The less stable the political situation, the greater will be the significance given to political considerations. Nigeria, as we shall see later, therefore attached decisive weight to political factors in reorganizing local government.

These political factors may be of twofold origin: political ideology and political expediency. The ideology underlying a country's political system has great influence on the structure and functioning of its system of local government and administration. The government will develop a system in accordance with the basic ideological principles which it has adopted, and which are therefore likely to be reflected in local institutions and their relationship with the central government. Britain has thus developed a more or less advanced system of local representative institutions in accordance with her interpretation of democracy which is frequently marked by a considerable, although declining, degree of local autonomy. Nigeria, in comparison, has opted for a

Western model of democracy with considerable degree of central control over local authorities (see below and chapter 8).

Although the system thus tends to acquire its overall orientation from the political ideology, political expediency is equally or sometimes even more important; the probability of attaining the desired structure depends primarily on the degree to which it is permitted by political conditions. In fact, therefore, the structure of power within a country, the existence, nature and strength of groups supporting or opposing the government, all exercise strong influence, if not on the design and reform of the local government system, then at least on its mode of operation. If such opposing centres of power are likely to affect the government's authority and even its existence, as the regional governments did before 1966 in Nigeria, it will be reluctant to design a framework of local government which may reinforce or encourage the oppositional forces, or which, on the other hand, may antagonize them to the point of revolt or secession. Such problems evidently determine the local government policy in a country like Nigeria with diverse, territorially cohesive ethnic groups.

Thus, following Wildavsky (1966,p.306), we can slightly expatiate the aforementioned political factors to become (a) 'Policy politics' which deals with the question of which policy will be adopted; (b) 'Partisan politics' which concerns the matter of which party will win a given contest, such as a debate or an election; (c) 'System politics' which deals with the issue of what structures and procedures are instituted in order to produce decisions; and (d) 'Patronage politics' which relates to the distribution of individual (or group) assignments to posts within the decision making system. We will look into all these and especially their effect on local government.

## POLITICAL CHANGE

In Nigeria and Britain, political changes and decisions have often led to changes in the structure and functions of local government. In most cases, political changes heralded in social and economic change. That is not to say that socio-economic developments have not had a great impact on political changes. But in the field of local government, political reforms and decisions have affected the functions and structure of local government more than social and economic changes. In chapter 2 we mentioned a number of political changes in Britain which led to local government structural and functional reforms in the 19th century. These include the French Revolution, the growth of trade union activities, the rise of political parties, the widening of the franchise, "laissez-faire" and various Acts of Parliament. There have always been close links between democracy in Parliament and in local government because if democracy is to work effectively, it must operate at all levels. Parliamentary reform in 1832 was logically followed by municipal reform in 1835. The extension of the franchise in 1884 was followed by the establishment of representative government in the counties through the Local Government Act of 1888 (Pearce, 1980,p.9).

Three important changes have occurred in the nature of local politics in the 20th century. First, there has been the extension of formal party politics into local government. Second, as in Nigeria, the rise of party in local government has produced an associated change, namely, in the nature of political leadership. The third and in some way most significant change in twentieth-century British local government has been the emergence of the professional officer as an important factor in local politics. Nigeria, too, in the 20th century has seen a number of political movements and changes which have considerably affected local government. Amongst these are: the rise of nationalism, the democratization of the

political system and the granting of political power (including independence) to Nigerians, the extension of formal politics into local government, and the coming of the military into politics. We shall expand on these in a moment and consider them in terms of those which are essentially local in nature and those which operate in a national context.

We have dealt with the introduction and abolition of indirect rule in Nigeria. Whatever its shortcomings, the system reflected the political, social and economic realities of the early 20th century Nigeria. Things started changing rapidly in the years between the War and independence in 1960. The Nigerian constitution was amended four times: in 1946, 1951, 1953 and 1957. These national political changes were transmitted to the local level. Thus, traditional native authority was replaced by the local government system. The change was quicker in the east and west than in the north where the system of administration through native authorities was less firmly rooted. But even then attempts were being made in the north to make the native authorities more democratic and responsive to public opinion. Thus in 1952 the Northern House of Assembly passed amendments to the Native Authority Ordinance which had the effect of abolishing the status of sole authority hitherto enjoyed by a considerable number of Emirs. They were obliged to accept advisory councils, though they were not bound to accept advice given by the councils. The 1954 Native Authority Law incorporated this amendment, authorized the Governor to prescribe the inclusion of a certain proportion of elected members of Native Authority Councils, and in the case of lesser chiefs obliged the chief to abide by the majority decision of his council. Later, further legislation gradually introduced the elective principle into the traditional authorities.

One of the first steps taken by Chief Awolowo's Action Group Government when it took office in the then Western Region in 1952

was to reform the machinery of local government. The Local Government Law of 1953 provided for one -, two - or three-tier local government at the divisional, district, or local council level based on the principles of English local government. It stipulated that not more than one quarter of the members of the councils could be traditional members and that the powers of intervention previously exercised by the Resident of a province were to be transferred to newly created inspectors of local government (usually the former Residents). Usually traditional chiefs acted as presidents of local councils in western Nigeria.

In the Eastern Region the demand for elected local councils was inspired by a genuine distrust of the native authorities, widely thought to have been created by the British, and by the demand for self-government. Because the east lacked a system of traditional native authority comparable with the north or west, the power of the British administrative officer was inevitably greater, and as the independence movement gained strength, the system became increasingly unpopular. It was reviewed in 1947 and the Local Government Ordinance of 1950 provided for the creation of elected county councils, urban and rural district councils and local councils. The councils were made directly responsible to the regional government and administrative officers were no longer responsible for taking executive action in the provision of local government services. In the east, as in the west, Residents' posts were abolished in 1956/7.

Two other political developments had significant effects on the structure of local government in the former Eastern Region. First, in order to clear the way for a regional system of personal income-tax introduced under the 1956 Finance Law, the Government decided to abrogate direct tax and rates levied on a personal basis which hitherto had been the main source of revenue to the local authorities. Although the Eastern Regional Government agreed to distribute to the authorities £1.9 million

of the £2.5 million it expected to collect through the new income tax in the first year, the measure was criticized on grounds of the local authorities' loss of local fiscal autonomy. Second, the Jones Commission, appointed in 1956 to inquire into the position, status, and influence of chiefs and natural rulers in the region and to make recommendations reported in that year that throughout the region there was a feeling that local councils had moved too far in the direction of popular representation through election and that there was an almost universal desire to see traditional heads presiding in every council.

#### THE FRANCHISE

Another political change which affected the nature of local government (e.g. election results, the extent of local taxation, calibre of councillors and efficiency, party politics in local government and therefore local democracy, etc) in Britain, as it did in Nigeria, was the broadening of the franchise. According to Keith-Lucas and Richards (1978, pp.18-20), by 1900 the franchise for all forms of local authority was basically the same - the occupier of rateable property. Unmarried women with the necessary qualifications were admitted in 1869 and married women in 1882. It was not until 1918 that a male voter's wife was admitted as such to the register. And it was not until the Sex Disqualification Removal Act of 1919 that women were allowed election as council members. Paupers too had been excluded from the franchise. They had traditionally been disfranchised from all parliamentary and local elections as, in effect, a separate and inferior estate of the realm. The People Act 1918 allowed paupers to vote in local government elections; but the Local Government Act 1933 prevented them from service on any local authority. It was not until the National Assistance Act 1949 when the concept of pauperism was eradicated that the poor could exercise their full rights of citizenship.

The franchise, however, was still based on the conception that it was the ratepayer who should control the local authority - a doctrine that led inevitably to a great emphasis on economy by councillors who saw themselves as essentially trustees of the rate fund. Long after the property qualifications had been abolished for voting for Parliament, the local government vote was denied to all except the occupier of rateable property and his wife (or her husband) and this restriction was not removed until the Representation of the People Act 1945. The Act, in making provision for the resumption of local government elections after the War, provided that all parliamentary electors should also have the local government vote. The abolition of this restriction added some eight million voters to the register and at last the right to vote in local elections came to be based on the person rather than on the occupation of property. It was a significant change, which implied also a change in the attitude to local councils - no longer primarily trustees of the rate fund.

Thus, the widening of the franchise has some implication for the reorganization of local government which in turn "is so central to the political world of organized power for particular advantage, that it must have implications for the continuing societal struggle to control government" (Dearlove, 1979, p.13). Rae (1971) details the political significance of the qualifications for the franchise and the political importance of qualifications for elected office. For example, the Audit (Local Authorities) Act, 1927, disqualified any person surcharged for more than £500 for five years from membership of any local authority. "The Labour Party saw that the main purpose was to exclude the Socialist members from the local authorities in East London" (Keith-Lucas, 1952, p.179). In my view, a political perspective on universal suffrage has to recognize its implication for the access of different interests to local government, and therefore for the likely direction of public policy.

Another political implication of the extension of the franchise for the nature of local government and its reform is the coming into local politics of professionals and small businessmen. "The franchise was extended lower and lower down the social scale, until it practically embraced the whole community, and gave the working classes a potential control over municipal as well as Parliamentary elections" (Redlich, 1903, Vol.1, p.278). The 'crowding out of the gentlemen' and their replacement by professionals and businessmen led to the call for a reorganization of local government because of the allegedly dwindling calibre of councillors (see chapter 8 for our view on this point). In other words, local government was said to be inefficient and ineffective because the social leaders and landowners assumed less of a role on local councils than was once the case in the golden era of local government.

It is as the working class have moved into local government, aided and abetted by the rise of the Labour Party, that so many councillors have been judged as of 'illiterate speech and low social standing' and as of inadequate and declining calibre (Dearlove, 1979, p.15).

We must add, however, that the idea that the working class have taken over as councillors is erroneous. This was a bourgeois fear that did not materialise in reality. Councillors are still predominantly middle class, though professionals, managers and small businessmen, rather than landowners and manufacturers.

In Nigeria, too, as socio-economic changes took place (see chapter 3), it became mandatory for public men to work on local councils, replacing the traditional rulers and their plenipotentiaries, usually friends and relatives. Table 4.1 depicts the gradual but effective abandonment of traditional members for elected members, usually professionals and small businessmen, on the councils (see Table 4.3).



TABLE 4.1: MEMBERSHIP OF SELECTED NATIVE AUTHORITIES IN THE FORMER WESTERN PROVINCES OF NIGERIA: 1944-49

| NATIVE AUTHORITY                           | Membership in 1944 |                      | Membership in 1949 |                      | Increase of elected members 1944-9 |
|--|--------------------|----------------------|--------------------|----------------------|------------------------------------|
|  | Traditional        | Elected or Nominated | Traditional        | Elected or Nominated |                                    |
| Ibadan District (excluding Advisory Board) | 11                 | 4                    | 11                 | 12                   | 8                                  |
| Idanre                                     | 32                 | 2                    | 32                 | 12                   | 10                                 |
| Ife Division                               | 25                 | 2                    | 29                 | 15                   | 13                                 |
| Illa District                              | 26                 | 1                    | 19                 | 8                    | 7                                  |
| Itsekiri                                   | 51                 | -                    | 7                  | 26                   | 26                                 |
| Ika (federal)                              | 11                 | -                    | 11                 | 11                   | 11                                 |
| Irrua Group (Ishan)                        | 17                 | -                    | 17                 | 8                    | 8                                  |

Source: Hailey, 1951, p.168.

Apart from these implications of political reforms for the calibre of councillors, Cornford (1963,p.37) points out another: the widening of the suffrage class became the most significant single factor in deciding political allegiance (see also, Rubinstein,1977,p.124). The arrival of professionals through the British Labour Party did a lot to "push businessmen off the council" (Morris and Newton, 1970,p.122). In Wolverhampton, "the growth of labour representation on the council is due largely to the extension of the franchise" (Jones,1969a,p.58). In London in the 1880s and 1890s the Labour Party became 'a new political force, supported by an extended trade unionism, and capable of winning elections for either liberals or socialists'. In the 1919 local elections Labour secured control of half the Metropolitan Borough Councils, and by 1934 had captured the London County Council (Thompson, 1967, pp.110,286). A wide suffrage, combined with single member constituencies, also helped to give the party structure the shape we know today; indeed, to the modern debate about representation and electoral systems party is central.

By implication, the extension of the franchise led to the detection of another 'defect' in the system of local government, namely, participation and the erosion of local democracy. We have argued how universal suffrage brought party politics, allegedly led by the Labour Party, into local government. It is argued, therefore, that the intrusion of party politics into local government discourages the right sort of people from putting their names forward, and encourages the selection of candidates solely on the basis of their record of party loyalty and service. On the council itself, it is claimed, the existence of party groups stifles free discussion and renders council debates meaningless since all decisions are effectively taken at private group meetings. Finally, it is alleged

that doctrinaire party policies are liable to be adopted regardless of individual local circumstances and flying in the face of technical advice from officers (see, Committee on the Management of Local Government, 1967, Vol.1, pp.109-111; Warren, 1952, p.187; Grant, 1971, 1972). The survey findings of the Royal Institute of Public Administration graphically portrays the intensity of party politics in local government. Of 31 county councils which responded to the questionnaire as many as 27 formally recognized party group leaders, and 29 had groups which met before full council. The aggregated figures indicate that 75 per cent of English and Welsh local authorities had formally recognized leaders and 86 per cent of party groups caucus met privately before council meetings.

Taking all these developments into consideration, we can say that the 20th century Nigeria, like the 19th and 20th centuries Britain, saw growing acceptance of the contention that as the common man prospered, so he would acquire the leisure time and the desire to turn his attention to responsible consideration of the affairs of state. As socio-economic changes were taking place, it became necessary to make some political changes and thus the various barriers to participation by the common man were removed. Hereditary and proprietary political institutions were gradually stripped of their powers while the powers of institutions of the elected representatives of the people were gradually enhanced.

#### NATIONALISM AND THE SECOND WORLD WAR

One of the political movements in Nigeria without a direct equivalent in Britain was nationalism. The movement which led to the gradual abandonment of indirect rule in favour of local government as the precursor of self-government and independence is traceable to social, economic and political factors. The failure of indirect rule in

eastern Nigeria left a continuing shock in its trail, despite the efforts of Sir Donald Cameron to ameliorate conditions. Whatever faith in the system might have still lingered was dealt an even greater blow by the Second World War. War served as an activating agent of political consciousness sweeping through the colonial world. It brought home to the Nigerian leaders a realization of the unworkability and inadequacy of indirect administration, a realization that its centrifugal pull worked against central representative government. The country soon found itself in the throes of problems connected with taxation, Africanization of the Government service, and education.

Nigerian socio-economic growth and nationalism have followed closely parallel courses and derived reciprocal impetus one from the other, both being a part of an awakening and a search for a new place in the world for the Nigerian. Nigerian nationalism was the end product of three major developments or conditions. The first was the 'social mobilization', to use Karl Deutsch's phrase, of substantial numbers of Nigerians as a result of a policy of determined Europeanization by Christian missionaries, a literacy curriculum, and the growth of a population of urban workers worried by psychological and economic insecurity. Of special importance was the introduction of schools, the development of cash crops and local economy, the growth of communications, and the introduction of information media such as newspapers.

The second was the accumulation of "conscious economic grievances among the mobilized groups, derived from the presence and the practices of large-scale European enterprise and what was believed to be government indifference regarding economic development" (Coleman, 1958, p. 410). The people's hopes were raised by steady economic growth, only to be dashed due to the Second World War. The war led to vast expansions in governmental powers in Nigeria and Britain in order to deal with the miseries wrought

by the massive economic crisis. The expansions assumed various forms, some radically socialist in nature, some only mildly reformist of the capitalist system; but all had one feature in common - a large complex bureaucracy at the expense of local government. Of course large complex governmental bureaucracy dampened the understanding of the people about what actions were being taken by officers of government in the name of the people. We shall return to this point in a moment.

The third and most important reason was the emergence of a Western-educated minority who worked in the government or firms and who felt the frustration of colonial rule most. This educated minority wanted "the form of freedom that is not merely self-determination and self-realization, but rather the determination and realization of goals which enhance, protect and unite life" (Marcuse, 1973, p. 51). By 1945, changes were beginning to be felt because the number of educated Nigerians had been on the increase. Different associations were formed, and most of which were launched solely to attack and demand the abolition of indirect rule. The antipathy of these men towards the indirect rule system and native administration had become more pronounced. In fact, the Nigerian Youth Movement, the precursor of the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons (N.C.N.C.) demanded a "complete abolition of the Indirect Rule system. Native administration should be a form of local government, and it is for that reason that we will encourage and support it" (see, Awolowo, 1947, p. 57.).

As we shall expatiate later, the introduction of party politics in Nigeria was to have a great effect on local government because the parties (N.C.N.C., Action Group and Northern Peoples Congress) not only won power at the regional level in the east, west and north respectively, but they reformed local administration namely, from the unrepresentative native authority system to democratic local government. The politicization of local government in Nigeria, as in Britain, produced an associated change,

namely in the nature of political leadership. Traditional rulers were swept aside for educated public persons.

The Second World War had a great impact on local government in Britain too. The war destroyed very large numbers of houses in London and a number of other cities and towns. In all, 280,000 houses were destroyed, 250,000 made inhabitable, and 250,000 seriously damaged. Local government was given the task to rehabilitate returning soldiers and others. Churchill demanded 'work, food and homes' and the councils had to take immediate action to ameliorate the physical and social problems attendant on the war. Local government functions, as well as its estimation increased in the eyes of the people and the political parties. 180,000 prefabricated metal houses were erected and councils helped to get house-building started again.

The huge social and physical problems which bedeviled the country led to a plethora of reports from commissions and committees. The most important of these was the Beveridge Report on Social Insurance and Allied Services, which laid the foundation for the pattern of the 'welfare state'. Out of this report and the subsequent discussions emerged a series of statutes some of which changed the pattern of local government functions. First came the National Insurance Act, 1946, the National Insurance (Industrial Injuries) Act, 1946 and the National Health Service Act, 1946. It was this last measure which made most difference to the role of the local authorities and started the ball rolling for the erosion of local government functions. On the one hand it took away from them all the hospitals, maternity homes, sanatoria and mental hospitals. On the other hand, though, it expanded the lesser functions of local authorities in such fields as ambulances, prevention of sickness and after-care, and midwifery.

## CENTRALIZATION

Another major post-war political change in Nigeria and Britain is centralization. The following were the pressures pushing in a centralist direction and therefore eroding the autonomy of local government in both countries:

- (a) Socio-economic changes, the importance of the work of local authorities in the public sector of the national economy and the resultant need to ensure that local authority expenditure is consistent with the Government's general economic policy;
- (b) the high proportion of local authority income by way of Government grant and Parliament's wish to exercise some supervision over the spending of this money: two-thirds of British local government fund expenditure come from central government in the form of grants. This is even higher in Nigeria, with the Federal and State Governments providing about four-fifth of local government expenditure;
- (c) the national importance of much of the work of local authorities, the need for national planning agencies, and the secular egalitarian trend involving the demand for minimum standards in performance. This demand for minimum standards of provision cannot be over-emphasized in Nigeria. In fact, the centralization of some local government functions was due to the doubt cast on the capability (financial and personnel) of local authorities to provide some essential amenities, such as secondary school education, courts, prisons and the police;
- (d) the need to protect taxpayers against possible financial mismanagement by local authorities, by means of Government loan sanction and audit;
- (e) the desirability of protecting local authority staff against arbitrary dismissal;
- (f) the need to provide suitable machinery for the settlement of disputes between the local authority and individuals, particularly with regard to

alleged maladministration through local commissioners; and

(g) the most important political change in Nigeria which led to large-scale centralization was the coming of the military into politics with their emphasis on discipline, national integration and unity. Their justification for their own entry into politics is to end politics, after a turbulent political period, and they began by outlawing the most vigorous and conspicuous of the pre-military political institutions, including local government. Such institutions were branded as divisive and opposed to national unity. Functional, political and administrative powers therefore became centralised under the military.

Centralisation is related to at least three of the 'defects' of local government perceived by reformers: that most local authorities are inefficient because they are too small and the panacea is therefore centralisation; and that local government is undemocratic because of the various forms of control - administrative, legislative, financial, political and technical - exercised by the central government (see chapter 5). We will deal here with the most important and most conspicuous form of centralisation - the transfer of functions from local to central government and quasi-autonomous organizations.

The Second World War inevitably had its impact on local government in Nigeria and Britain. Although the rate of central control increased considerably after 1945 due to political tensions and economic difficulties, centralisation of local government functions in Britain date much further back (see Robson, 1966, p.13). Local government functional losses are regarded by critics as reducing the power of the authorities and their estimation in the eyes of the electorate. As Professor Robson put it, "there can be no doubt whatever that the transfer of services from locally elected councils to centrally appointed boards signifies a loss of democratic control over those services" (1952, p.350; see also, Royal



Commission on Local Government in Greater London, 1960, paras. 227, 707; Money, 1973, p. 319).

The origin of central-local tension can be summarized thus: some services are national, but administrative efficiency requires that they be performed locally (Foster et al, 1980, p. 48). Despite these tensions, local government continued to enjoy a lot of prestige and respect until the beginning of this century. Its functions included the provision and maintenance of streets, roads, police, prisons and local courts. Local government was in-charge of the provision of poor relief, education, gas, water sewerage, and later electricity and buses (Robson, 1966, pp. 13-32).

However, social and economic changes (see chapter 3) had made the provisions of the 1888 Act obsolete. Beliefs and values had changed. Centralisation was not only a response to these changed and changing socio-economic situations, but it was also a matter of political expedience. Foster et al (1980, pp. 45-63; see also Robson, 1966, pp. 13-32) catalogue local government functional losses. Some, - such as the Poor Law (1934-47), most civil airports (1945), electricity (1947), gas (1948) and more recently water (1974) - have been transferred to public corporations. Others - such as trunk roads (1936 and 1946), hospitals (1947), and most remaining local health services (1974) - have been transferred to central government.

Local government in Nigeria also witnessed a great deal of centralisation to the point where people regarded them as 'mere agents' first, of the Regional Governments and then of the State Governments (Wraith, 1972, p. 67). Prior to 1976 there had been a steady encroachment on the preserves of local government which the reforms were designed to reverse. In the west the loss of traditional functions was in top gear in 1968 when aspects of primary and secondary education were assigned to the State. A state water corporation was established to take over water supply from local

government. Police and prisons were transferred to the federal level in 1969. In 1970 forest reserves, "from which many councils derived considerable income" (Oyediran, 1974, p. 552), were taken over by the State Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources. This centralisation happened to coincide with an improvement in the qualifications of councillors and led one observer to predict that "frustrations will increase as the local leadership realises that it is called upon to do little more than administer motor parks and cemeteries...an enfeebled local government can hardly be expected to develop community interest and support for facilities and services which are wholly state responsibilities" (Oyediran, 1974, p. 552).

In the east the Local Government Law, 1960 (Part X) gave the minister for local government extensive powers with the result that he virtually controlled local government services. The functions of councils at the divisional level, under the reorganisation of the late sixties and early seventies known as 'development administration', were mainly advisory.

In the north, the position of the native authorities was weakened by the Provincial Administration Law of 1962 which provided for the appointment of a provincial commissioner, of ministerial rank, to represent the Government in each province. These politicians took over the functions formerly exercised by the Residents and therefore control from the centre became more tight and this left the native authorities with little freedom. And it was in the north that the most marked centralisation took place after the military coup of 1966. Previously the provision of services directly to the public was left largely in the hands of the native authorities (N.A.s). The regional government provided services whose scale required resources beyond the capacity of the N.A.s. There was a presumption in favour of local government, albeit of a traditional kind. The system was also flexible with services such as water supply being

allocated between regional and local government according to the resources of particular N.A.s. Only a minority of authorities were in a position to run hospitals or welfare services, and there were wide disparities in the level of provision in other services between the wealthier and poorer emirates. Nevertheless, "the general tendency was for services rendered directly to the public to be regarded as native authority responsibilities until these became so complicated or expensive that Government had to take over" (Adedeji and Rowland, 1972, p.304).

The native courts, police forces and prisons were centralised largely for political reasons, though with significant financial consequences for local government in the form of between 7.8 and 11.1 per cent of total recurrent expenditure in 1967-8. Great confusion was caused by leaving in operation a statute which vested the power to maintain law and order in local government (Summerhayes, 1969, p.219; Nemetz, 1971). Then in 1970 most functions relating to agriculture, animal health, co-operatives and roads were taken over by the states, partly because they were already under the technical direction of ministry staff and partly because the states wanted even more control. The fiscal position of the federal and state governments was also superior to that of local government (Nemetz, 1971, pp.5-6). The regional and state governments had preferred to take over services rather than strengthen local finances. Indeed the weak fiscal position of local government was brought about by taxation changes imposed by the centre and then used as the rationale for centralisation. Local government emerged from these changes with what one observer regarded as 'trivial' functions, and the presumption about the location of responsibility for local services swung significantly in favour of the state government (Yahaya, 1975, p.27). Thus in almost all the states in the federation, the pre-1976 local government reforms saw a shift of powers, manpower and financial resources from the local authorities to the

state ministries and public corporations.

The reasons given for centralizing local government functions were similar to those used in Britain (see Foster et al, 1980, pp. 49-63). Apart from those given above, the first argument which we are going to advance for the transfer of functions from local government is what we call political expediency. The political temperature is higher in Nigeria than in Britain, largely because Nigeria has not yet achieved the state of nationhood. That is to say that she is often in danger of internal dissension and has yet to achieve natural unity, which accounts for the coups and counter-coups, and even a civil war. In a situation like Nigeria, therefore, the central government felt that national unity must be their overriding aim and therefore they guarded against anything divisive; and there is no doubt that local government has often been misunderstood, or misrepresented, as local self-government, or the creation of small tribal states which could threaten national unity. In Britain, politics in local government is usually contained within reasonable limits, and while political clashes can be sharp on particular issues, it is accepted that much municipal work is a-political. In Nigeria, on the other hand, politics in local government can be explosive, and the central government naturally take this into account as a hazard to security. Moreover, the leaders, given the fragile basis of their legitimacy, are afraid of decentralizing power to local levels because of the fear that pockets of resistance would build up around local autonomous centres.

Another reason adduced for centralising local government functions is that local administration must be geared to development, and if this is taking place within the framework of a national development plan it is not easy for the planners to allow very wide margins of local discretion. By contrast, local government in Britain has very little to do with economic development, which is the province of private enterprise or

public corporation. Local authorities are concerned with services, and their role in development is at most the ancillary one of providing the environment which will attract others to develop.

Other reasons advanced for transferring local government functions to central government include: staff shortage at the local level; widespread corruption and nepotism; lack of confidence in the capability of local government; too many local authorities were regarded as being too small to attract the necessary staff, to generate adequate revenue, and to be effective and efficient. Another ostensible reason for these changes was the desire to improve services many of which were considered to be ineffective, inefficient and corrupt. But just as important a motivation appears to have been the self-serving desire for bureaucratic growth of the various state ministries.

We can say, therefore, that the regional governments failed to maintain in the sixties the interest they had in local government in the fifties. Political, financial and other pressures had a profound impact on the structures, staff, services, and finances of local government. The regional governments, especially the west and east, devoted more effort in developing ministry bureaucracy - each with its own field administration - than in promoting local government. While the regional budgets increased dramatically, the local ones did not; the total amount expended in the mid-sixties was actually less than in the final years of the fifties. And in the west especially, the elected councils gave way to nominated ones in 1963 - concomitant with the political crises.

The latter half of the sixties was marked by several events which had a profound impact on local government, as we shall see later. First, the coup of 1966 suspended representative (including local representative) government. Secondly, the outbreak of the civil war in 1967 suspended local government in the east and diverted attention from the improvement

of local government in other areas of the country. Thirdly, the transformation of the four regions into twelve states (then 19 in 1976), which were formally created in 1967 but commenced operationally in 1968, has led to major changes in local government. The series of tax riots in 1968 and 1969 in the western state underscored the importance throughout the federation of being responsive to the needs of the local areas. The loss of police and prisons functions to federal agencies and of other functions to state agencies principally in 1968 was an indication of the lack of confidence in the integrity and efficiency of the local institutions. By 1969, local government throughout Nigeria was in a state of crisis. Or as one journal puts it editorially,

the institutions of Nigerian local government have failed to enhance their capacity, to involve the public, to respond to local needs, or to administer effectively and responsibly the various local public services. In fact, they have declined. The hopes which accompanied the reforms of the early fifties have been dashed on the disappointments of the sixties (Quarterly Journal of Administration, April 1969, pp.169-170).

Thus, the effect of the military take-over on local government proves our hypothesis that local government is an organism which must respond to environmental and political changes. Furthermore, the large-scale overhaul which local government faced under the military corroborates what we have said earlier: that major administrative reforms are usually direct outcomes of very serious crisis conditions faced by a government, such as the take-over of power, through revolution or otherwise, by political groups who differ strongly from those previously in office.

Thus, it is clear that all democratic states have experienced a rapid growth of governmental functions in recent years, and that much of this growth has occurred centrally. But while local operations have everywhere declined in relative importance, they have grown substantially in absolute terms (see chapter 8). The public demands resulting from industrialization and urban living have forced local authorities to extend

or adjust traditional services and to provide a wide range of new services. Yet everywhere the growth of 'big democracy' has been accompanied by a sharp concentration of administrative space. As a consequence, the spatial requirements of public administration have tended to change much more rapidly than politically determined boundaries and there has resulted an institutional chaos of intergovernmental, ad hoc, and special-purpose agencies which tended to destroy the foundations of local self-government in Britain and Nigeria. In these complex and rapidly changing relations, local authorities in both countries have experienced a gradual erosion of their former independence, and have been subject increasingly to severe financial dislocation.

Looking at the importance attached to local government before say 1946 in Britain and 1960 in Nigeria, and the great decline they faced thereafter and up to the time of the reforms in the seventies, one cannot but agree with Professor Langrod that "local government has within itself, inevitably, the seed of its own death once the process of democratization is accomplished; democracy in action will claim, then, sooner or later, but inevitably a breakaway from the fundamental idea of local government and will demand administrative centralization" (1953,p.29). Local government was given so many vital functions, local government had become so important that the political parties had come to regard it as a possible repository of their power. It is this vital role that local government came to play in Nigeria and Britain that led the political parties to intervene in local government, because a great deal of political influence was derived from control of local councils. In other words, political parties became involved in local councils because they derived much of their local influence from the membership of them. The pioneers of local party organization always realised the importance of municipal elections as barometres indicating the state of national opinion and as reliable training

grounds for party workers. It is to the politicization of local government that we now turn.

#### PARTY POLITICS IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

We do not attempt to survey the whole field of party politics in local government, but its impact on local government in Britain and Nigeria, party politics being one of the things that have 'happened' to local government and therefore made the provisions of the 1888 Act irrelevant.

There has been little formal study of the workings of party in local government and much of the discussion that does take place is still largely concerned with whether or not party in local government is desirable. Buxton noted that "the role of the party groups in the actual running of the council (has)...been almost as little studied as their relations with the outside parties" (1973,p.85). The Royal Commission on Local Government in Greater London left out the intrusion of partisan politics in local government because they did "not conceive it as any part of our duty to have regard to considerations of party politics" (1960,p.65). Yet it is necessary to study the impact of partisan politics on local government because it relates to local policy formation and execution, the day-to-day work of local authority, the result of local elections, the calibre of councillors and the discussion of local democracy. In Nigeria especially, they dominated local government, and in large measure contributed to its failure, and the consequent need for reform.

In Britain, the existence of organized political groups on local councils is no recent phenomenon. As Bulpitt puts it, "the search for a golden age (in the 19th and early 20th centuries) when politics and parties played no part whatsoever in local government is quite futile; conflict has always existed, and parties were always present" (1967,p.5; see also,



Brand,1974,pp.133-4). Hadfield and MacColl (1948,p.90) point out that the influence of political parties had increased and was increasing in local government. Indeed, parties had come to be seen as the "indispensable element in the conversion of local councils into responsible governments" (Dunsire,1956,p.87).

A coherent urban political programme attached to a permanent political organization, however, did not emerge until the last decades of the 19th century. The foundation of the Birmingham Liberal Association in 1865 and its adherence to a programme of municipal reform laid the foundation for Joseph Chamberlain's successful capture of the City Council and the School Board in 1873, and things were never going to be the same again in local government (Briggs, 1968,p.193). The emergency of municipal Socialist ideas in the 1890s in the Labour movement gave added impetus to the growth of a programmatic local government politics (Gyford,1976,p.60). Labour therefore, extended partisan politics in local government especially after the Second World War, but it did not introduce party politics into local government (Young,1975,p.29).

Representative local government in Nigeria, on the other hand, was a child born out of party politics, and therefore, inevitably, born into partisan politics. The first local government laws in 1950-54 were passed in a state of political urgency and euphoria. "Complicated political motives were behind them - destroying indirect rule through the chiefs (the hall-mark of colonialism), creating local machinery for national political parties, placating local interests and handing out patronage" (Wraith, 1972,p.53). It is significant that national leaders, later to become Presidents, Prime Ministers and Opposition Leaders, all took the ministerial portfolio of local government in the early days of power. In this atmosphere practical realities were thrown overboard, and functions

and powers were given to local authorities which they had no hope of using. Thus, local authorities in Nigeria were created for political and prestige reasons, and as Professor Dudley (1968) said in his study of party politics in northern Nigeria, the Northern Peoples Congress relied primarily not on its own efforts in organization but on the numerous staff of the native administrations, which provided the party with continuous and direct access to the area and people under their jurisdiction. It was therefore the desire to ensure conformity, the determination to break, particularly, Tiv opposition, a group known for their individualism, that led to the riot of 1960 and again 1964.

Some of the arguments advanced in defence of parties at the local level can also be used to show their impact on local government. The battle of parties on the local authority is not a mere charade; their conflict represents a genuine disagreement as to what councils should do, how they should do it, and whose interests and values should be advanced. Moreover, with formal powers dispersed amongst the various committees and sometimes delegated to chairmen, and with individual councillors able to sink their own responsibility in the wider corporate responsibility of the council as a whole, "party organization in council has the great merit of identifying responsibility for policy and action" (Committee on the Management of Local Government, 1967, Vol.5, p.398). Party can thus impact a sense of direction and purpose to the disparate activities of the various committees and departments, and can provide the officers with some form of guidance as to what proposals are likely to meet with acceptance. In short party provides a common frame of political reference for the officers, and a common source of information, inspiration and allegiance for the councillors, thereby unifying an otherwise fragmented pattern of government. In addition to all these and in contrast to what is available in Britain, political parties in Nigeria were not divided from each other by social and economic

policies and beliefs, but by personalities and ethnic rivalries which contributed greatly to the failure of local government.

Conversely, a party with a majority in the council which is reminded of its responsibility by an effective opposition, the local press, and its own internal discipline provides a local government with strong and effective organization.

Outside the council itself parties are also important as a means of organizing local elections and mobilizing the vote, and in particular as a mechanism of recruitment into the ranks of councillors. In the absence of parties in local elections the consequences may be those experienced in the United States:

In most situations in which parties have been abolished in municipal elections, the conservative forces of the community have won most elections. In the absence of a party based on the lower strata, which could define issues that appeal to their interests and bring them to the polls....the voting portion of the electorate in such elections is disproportionately composed of the more privileged... (Lipset, 1964, Vol. 1, p. 1xi; see also, Adrian, 1952).

The role of the parties in ensuring the widest use of the electoral process is crucial. In Britain, more than half of the seats in Parliament were uncontested before the emergence of national parties (Lloyd, 1965). The same problem has already been mentioned in the local context, where the evidence suggests that "competition for seats is strongest in urban areas and appears to bear a relationship to the presence of party organizations" (Committee on the Management of Local Government, 1967, Vol. 5, p. 48). With larger authorities and larger electoral areas the importance of party as a means of enabling individuals to wage a local campaign seems likely to increase rather than to decrease. This is particularly true for working-class candidates, for whom parties are in any case the chief avenue of recruitment to the council chamber.

Beyond their periodic function of recruiting candidates and organizing

election campaigns, parties also serve to some degree to aggregate the various interests within the community. The close links, personal and organizational, between the parties and differing local social and economic groups, enable the parties to receive and absorb the demands of such groups and to carry them into the policy making process. This may help to account for the comparatively modest degree of independent pressure group activity at the local level in Britain compared with the United States.

Political parties then represent genuine divergencies of view, they give coherence to the work of local authorities, they function as a means of political recruitment and election organization, and they represent the demands and interests of differing social groups both organized and unorganized.

The rise of the Labour Party brought with it three vital changes: it was associated with speedy transaction of business in short council meetings, with little attempt by the full council to alter committee recommendations, with few items being referred back for further consideration and with few questions put to committee chairmen. In addition, Labour councils were much more prone to limit the autonomy of officers and to involve the councillors in questions of detail (Boaden, 1971a, p.422). Secondly, the Labour Party widened the spectrum of local debate, because it emphasized the provision of services than the other parties - such as housing and social services (Boaden, 1971b, p.112). In other words, Labour widened the scope of local government, as a result of which it was to acquire many new functions, such as town and country planning, which would previously not have been seen as legitimately within the purview of local authorities (Goldsmith, 1979, p.17). Thirdly, the Labour Party emphasized the importance of campaign programmes, introduced pre-council caucus meetings, and a sense of party discipline. As Bulpitt (1967) has shown there is little uniformity in party politics in English local government, which run from rigid one-party systems to loose multi-party ones. Nevertheless, one of the consequences

of these Labour-associated changes was to force similar changes on the Liberal and Conservative parties both of which now have their own caucus meetings, fight local elections on a programmatic party basis with candidates who have some party connection and who are likely to support the party line.

The impact of party politics on local government in Nigeria prior to the military coup of 1966 was almost completely negative. Party differences impeded council work and brought the whole system of local government to a standstill. There was indiscipline, corruption, indolence, nepotism, gross excesses in party patronage, and generally, party politics lowered the morale of the staff of local government. A staff of local government risked dismissal if he belonged or was seen to belong to the opposition party. Party militants were used as administrative personnel, and party and administrative structures brought together. In Nigeria the council often became the constituency party organization.

Centralization, which became the order of the day, was largely motivated by intense partisan politics designed to satisfy only the ruling party in a given region. In 1963, a well-known political commentator, Theo Ola said that "the greatest single enemy of local government system in Nigeria has been party politics" (Daily Times, January 26, 1963). Similarly, the acting secretary of Ibadan City Council, S.T. Fahm, argued that

the existing local government was conceived without allowing for complications of party politics and the use that can be made of local government councils by national political parties. It was introduced at the time when the politicians were keen on exercising newly acquired powers; but today it appears the wheel has turned full circle (1963, pp. 7-8).

Another important convention or political expediency which was ignored in Nigeria but which is widely, though not universally, observed in Britain is the distribution of offices. In a borough, for instance, it is customary either for the mayor to come from the majority party and the deputy mayor from the minority one, or for the two parties to hold the office

in turn; this symbolizes the fact that the mayor is the chief representative citizen and is to that extent above politics. Similarly, it is customary either to share the chairmanships of committees between the parties (see Table 4.2), or to arrange that the chairman comes from one party and the vice-chairman from another; it is also customary to spread the membership of the committees proportionately between the parties.

The contrast in Nigeria is sharp. Not only does the winning party take all the chairmanships, but unless restrained they will appoint only party members to committees. This situation was carried to an absurd stage that the then Western Regional Government became compelled to include a section in its local government law enabling the Minister to use powers of direction if it appeared to him 'that the minority parties are not adequately represented on a committee of the council'; otherwise they might well have been excluded altogether (Wraith, 1972, p.89). The power of the majority party used to pervade every aspect of a council's life and work, even to the extent of compelling the council's employees to join the party under threat of dismissal.

TABLE 4.2:

PATRONAGE DISTRIBUTION IN TWO COUNCILS IN BRITAIN: 1955-60

|                                    | MANCHESTER | ROCHDALE |
|------------------------------------|------------|----------|
| Committee Chairmanships            | NP & M     | NP       |
| Committee Places                   | P          | P        |
| Alderman                           | P          | P        |
| Mayoralty                          | P          | P        |
| Outside Board and Committee Places | P          | NP       |

NP = Non-party-political (seniority usually basis of distribution)

P = proportional to party representation

M = majority party takes all.

Source: Bulpitt, 1967, p.122

The above problems took on an added force given the Nigerian socio-political conditions of ethnicity and conflict between the traditional and modern seats of authority. However, a special problem arose in areas or regions where the party controlling the regional government was different from the ruling party at the local level. Several forms of pressure were used by such a party at the regional level to break such an opposition. This was the situation in the then Northern and Western Regions of Nigeria where you had pockets of opposition, such as the Tiv example given earlier, to the ruling parties at the regional levels.

In both the Northern and Western Regions especially, all kinds of political victimization and oppression were used to elicit conformity with the ruling party. Of course, you had the Native and Customary Courts, the prisons and the Native Authority Police who were charged with such a responsibility. Generally, local councils that refused to conform had their grants withheld or in the final resort faced dissolution. Things had gone so bad that Akindolire asserted that "the present mess in local government emanates from over-politicizing of our local authorities" (1963,p.3), and McGrath (1969,p.189) concluded that the council was anything but the democratic local institution it was formerly meant to be.

Like in Nigeria, the politicization of local government in Britain has led to a change in the nature of political leadership (Lee,1963; Jones,1969a). 'The fit and proper social leaders' who dominated town and country government in the 19th century have been cast off and their place has been taken by public or party persons, people whose position in the political or social hierarchy of the community depends ultimately on their political skills and particularly on their party status and label rather than hereditary or proprietary reasons. Table 4.3 graphically portrays the scale of the change from local councils composed of traditional rulers

and their plenipotentiaries to local government dominated by public persons.

TABLE 4.3:      PERCENTAGE OF COUNCILLORS BY MAJOR OCCUPATION:  
THREE WESTERN NIGERIA COUNCILS, 1959-1963.

|                      | IFE  | IWO | OGBOMOSO | TOTAL |
|----------------------|------|-----|----------|-------|
| Farmer               | 27.3 | 20  | 15       | 24.1  |
| Produce Buyer        | 23.9 | 12  | -        | 18.1  |
| Trader               | 12.5 | 20  | 20       | 15.0  |
| Teacher              | 6.8  | 16  | 10       | 9.0   |
| Carpenter            | 4.7  | 4   | 15       | 6.0   |
| Tailor               | 4.7  | 4   | 25       | 7.5   |
| Public Letter Writer | 3.4  | 4   | -        | 3.0   |
| Lawyer               | 3.4  | -   | -        | 2.2   |
| Store Keeper         | 3.4  | -   | -        | 2.2   |
| Timber Contractor    | 2.3  | 4   | -        | 2.2   |
| Butcher              | 1.1  | 4   | -        | 1.5   |
| Black Smith          | 1.1  | -   | -        | .7    |
| Goldsmith            | 1.1  | 8   | 5        | 3.0   |
| Bricklayer           | 1.1  | -   | -        | .7    |
| Painter              | 1.1  | -   | -        | .7    |
| Herbalist            | 1.1  | -   | -        | .7    |
| Truck Driver         | 1.1  | -   | -        | .7    |
| Nurse                | -    | -   | 5        | .7    |
| Washerman            | -    | -   | 5        | .7    |
| Insurance Broker     | -    | 4   | -        | .7    |
| TOTAL                | 100  | 100 | 100      | 100   |

Source: Oyediran, 1973, p.459.

The rise of the party man has led to a change in the way formal political leaders perceive the changes, issues and policies with which they deal. As Dearlove (1973, pp.206-26) has shown, the ideology of the local councillor is an important determinant of the kinds of policies he will favour or the way in which he perceives problems. The emergence of party candidates has meant that party ideology has tended to become much more important as a determinant of policies: Labour councils, for instance, will not sell council houses, and Conservative councils are not enthusiastic about building new ones.

In Nigeria, however, the failure of local government during the first republic could be traced directly to the absence of ideology and the



calibre of the politicized councillors. Their calibre was low if measured in terms of their educational qualifications (see Table 4.4), professional and political experience and their level of probity. Most of them were corrupt, inefficient and inexperienced in the affairs of government. They dabbled in routine matters of administration such as the award of contracts and staffing matters.

TABLE 4.4: PERCENTAGE OF COUNCILLORS BY EDUCATION: THREE WESTERN NIGERIA COUNCILS, 1952-63

| EDUCATIONAL LEVEL | IFE  | IWO  | OGBOMOSO | TOTAL |
|-------------------|------|------|----------|-------|
|                   | N.86 | N.25 | N.20     | N.136 |
| None              | 19.8 | 24.0 | 35.0     | 22.9  |
| Adult Education   | 16.3 | 4.0  | 10.0     | 13.0  |
| Primary           | 47.7 | 56.0 | 40.0     | 48.0  |
| High School       | 5.8  | 8.0  | 5.0      | 6.1   |
| Teacher Training  | 2.2  | 8.0  | 10.0     | 4.6   |
| University        | 8.1  | -    | -        | 5.4   |
| TOTAL             | 99.9 | 100  | 100      | 100   |

Source: Oyediran, 1973, p.457.

All of these set of changes, which we categorized earlier as being of essentially a local nature, are local only in their impact. The changes themselves have contributed considerably to what might be called the 'delocalisation' of local government: it is in this sense that they are inter-dependent with the national changes. As Goldsmith points out, the strong partisan nature of local politics clearly has a national dimension, which is clearly seen by electors:

Now more than ever, local electors use local elections as a means of passing judgement on the performance of parties at Westminster and in Whitehall, and national politicians use local election results as indicators of likely general/national election outcomes (1979, p.17).

In the same vein, the fact that local political leaders are likely to be party men means that they will use their position to implement the

local dimensions of their party's national policies: the amount of money spent on education and the sale or non-sale of council houses are good examples. Many local leaders may be prominent within the ranks of the national party, even if they have no ambitions to rise further up the political ladder. In this way, national and local politics become entwined, and local politics become delocalised.

#### PROFESSIONALISM

Another significant political change which is less prominent in Nigeria but which has affected English local government in the 20th century is the rise of the professional officer. The social and economic changes which we enumerated (see chapter 3) meant that local government has expanded its scope and therefore needed expert advice to tackle these complex problems. The late 1960s brought both an emphasis on efficiency and management in public administration, and the emergence of new demands for local democracy, participation, community power and professional autonomy (Hill, 1970). Given the doubtful strength of local electoral accountability, the extent to which local government develops more democratic and responsive processes depends considerably on the role played by local administrators (Sharpe, 1967; see also Gregory, 1969, pp. 31-47). Perhaps the most important development affecting the professionals' role is the growth of procedures for corporate decision making. In a period of greater restraint on public expenditure, the crucial decisions may be those on overall social priorities. Examples of expert hands are seen in such occupations as planner, social worker and housing manager. In education, the 1944 Education Act provided the impetus for major post-war development, and also made it a statutory obligation on every local education authority to appoint a permanent education officer. In his article, Brian Neve points out the professional, co-ordinating and brokerage role of the Chief

### Education Officer:

several case studies of local decision making in the post-war period have isolated the CEO as the main source of innovation over a period of time or pointed to the likely connection between the arrival of a new CEO and, for example, the creation of new advisory posts, an acceleration of local need, or a new move on comprehensive reorganization. A study of Reading shows the CEO as the source of all innovation, while another describes a new CEO in Birkenhead successfully revitalizing a dormant education service (Neve, 1977, p. 293).

In short, the CEO is seen as a catalyst, an expert among experts.

The result, as people like Lee (1974,) Dennis (1972) and Davies (1972) have shown, is that these professionals have risen to positions of enormous influence, if not dominance, in the local decision-making arena. Their position is one which many councillors find it difficult to challenge. They can be more or less aware of national developments and reports, and use these to extract initial commitments to policies which may have a significant long-term impact, and in the past many of them have done much to foster a bi-partisan consensus on decision making. Neve (1977, p. 293) again cites the example of a study of the prolonged comprehensive reorganization process in Manchester (1953-67) with the CEO playing a mediating role between two implacable bodies: a Labour Education Committee strongly committed to reform and grammar school teachers determined to resist it. In such circumstances the education officer has 'professional' loyalties both to the teachers and to his own judgement of the educational welfare of the children (present and future), while also having a 'democratic' loyalty to his committee. Thus even when the policy initiative comes from the party group or from prominent councillors, the chief officer may play a key role in co-ordinating the process in reconciling opposing interests and in determining the form of the policy outcome.

Furthermore, the rise of the professional official with his ties with a national professional institution has delocalised local government.

Thus the Society of Chief Executives protested when Rother District Council dismissed its Chief Executive. The professional institutes are often very important influences on the form and content of legislation and its implementation: planning provides a good example with the 1968 Town and Country Planning Act. These national associations, such as the Association of County Councils and the Association of Municipal Corporations, have tremendous influence on all legislation affecting the work of local authorities. In their own way, these 'national' representatives of local authority interests have all contributed to the delocalisation of local government in Britain.

#### CONCLUSION

Having analysed the changes which occurred in the society while the structure of local government was relatively stable, the answers to the questions which we set ourselves at the beginning are starting to emerge: Was reform needed because unchanging social values could no longer be realised through an outdated administrative system? Or had values changed, so that reform was needed? Well, if we take the socio-economic and political changes that occurred into consideration, it is not surprising that so much criticism was levied on local government in England and Wales. Instead for local government to be reformed as these changes were occurring, what happened was an extensive preservation of existing status and privilege at each successive stage in the growth of the structure. Furthermore, new tasks have had to be devolved upon local authorities in a makeshift haphazard manner. Moreover, there was no sufficiently responsive machinery for the adaptation of the structure to changing conditions. By the 1960s, however, the socio-economic and political changes outlined above had created sufficient pressure and criticism to bring about systematic reform. It is to these criticisms that we now turn in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER FIVE

DIAGNOSIS: THE DEFECTS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

## INTRODUCTION

The increase in population and the requirements of the time has outgrown the capacity of local machinery created for more limited objects (Wright and Hobhouse, 1884,p.iv).

In chapter 1 we said that a diagnosis should indicate the symptoms which have to be translated into a coherent picture on the basis of which action can be planned and carried out with a reasonable assurance that objectives will be achieved. Critics believed that the existing local government administrations in Nigeria and Britain had failed to meet the demands put on them. The impact of growth took them by surprise and they could not keep up with the times. The pattern of settlement was always well ahead of the pattern of organization. Clearly the human geography, pattern of life, functions of local authorities, and nature of local administration had changed so drastically that the need for new institutions became inevitable.

The British system of local government created by the Act of 1888 was working so well that the President of the Local Government Board declared to the House of Commons in 1893 that "no man can point to a single instance in which our municipal system has broken down" (cited in Dearlove,1979,p.21). This tribute was attested to at the beginning of this century by Dr.Josef Redlich who pointed to "the marvellous increase in the efficiency of local government and the equally marvelous growth in its functions" (1903, Vol.2,p.408). He also praised the flourishing system of democratic local government noting how "the gradual substitution of a democratic for a privileged franchise has not done away with the governing classes...democracy was not found to have deprived the upper classes of political leadership" (1903,Vol.1,pp.215-16, 278).

The socio-economic and political changes detailed in chapters 3 and 4 made redundant this happy late Victorian golden age of democracy, efficiency, autonomy from central control and high calibre councillors. The local government system in the 20th century and especially after the Second World War came under heavy criticism. Critics have described the system as inefficient, subject to massive and increasing central control and therefore it was undemocratic, and dominated by councillors and officers of declining calibre. Buxton concluded that "local government was not capable of providing an efficient service" (1973,p.54; see also, Richards, 1978, p.33).

So terribly bad did critics believe things had gone that Richard Crossman, Minister of Housing and Local Government, denounced the system as archaic and regressive (1975, p.440). Municipal administration was regarded as inefficient, ineffective and unbusinesslike, and Brodrick (1875,p.27) was driven to the conclusion that the 19th century reorganization on which the pre-1974 structure was modelled, was based on 'unscientific legislation'. A lot of people, including politicians, local government officers, academics and critics became disturbed at the manifest inability of local authorities to cope with the major problems facing them (Robson, 1966,p.122).

Small wonder that the representatives of the London County Council in giving evidence before the Ullswater Commission on London Government, complained bitterly of the unsatisfactory nature of the local government area; a structure which they declared was entirely unsuitable to the modern requirements of local government, particularly in regard to such services as education, electricity, housing, transport and the regulation of wholesale markets (Robson, 1931,p.41).

All these views were aggregated in the official words of the Royal Commission on Local Government in England, and the Labour Government's

White Paper on the Reform of Local Government in England:

unless local government is organized to meet the needs of the future, and in particular is organized in units large enough to match the technical and administrative requirements of the services which it administers, its powers must diminish, and with it the power of local democracy.....Radical change is overdue. And only if such change occurs, and local government is organized in strong units with power to take major decisions, will present trends toward centralization be reversed, and local democracy secure its place as a major part of our democratic system (1970, paras. 10, 97; see also, Royal Commission on Local Government in Greater London, 1960, paras. 227, 707,; Money, 1973, p. 319).

In Nigeria too, commentators praised the inherent qualities of the pre-independence system of local government and its capacity for the conduct of affairs (Hailey, 1957, p. 460). Azikwe's N.C.N.C. saw local government as a way of extending "democratic principles and advancing the interests of the people of Nigeria and the Cameroons....(and as a) suitable means for the purpose of imparting political education to the people of Nigeria" (see, Arikpo, 1967, p. 61). This was orchestrated in the fifties by Awolowo, the leader of the Action Group, who glowingly enlogized the local government system:

Local government is the foundation on which the massive and the magnificent super-structure of state, regional or central government is erected. Indeed, it is the most efficient agency by means of which the regional or state government minister can respond to the basic needs, welfare, and general well-being of the citizens (Western Nigeria House of Assembly Debates, 1952, pp. 96-7).

Thus according to Brian Smith, local government in Nigeria came to be seen as "playing an important role in achieving the developing world's prime objectives: securing the maximum returns from material and human resources, and raising the standards of living" (1967, p. 28). In another article, he was so convinced of the efficiency of local government in the provision of essential services in the Northern Region that he asserted that even if the regional government collapsed, the local governments were capable of running vital services in the region (Smith, 1967, p. 40; see also, Wraith, 1972, p. 200).

The post-war dreams of an efficient and democratic local government evaporated in the sixties. Local authorities in Nigeria, like their British counterparts, were said to be inefficient because their sizes were too small to generate adequate revenue and attract the right quality of staff and councillors. They were also believed to be over-politicized, corrupt, undemocratic and stagnant (West Africa, 1971,p.214). Things had degenerated so much that critics came to the conclusion that

the institutions of Nigerian local government have failed to enhance their capacity, to involve the public, to respond to local needs, or to administer effectively and responsibly the various local public services. In fact, they have declined. Nigerian local governments today are deprived of their representative institutions, are being shorn of their functions, and are declining in manpower and fiscal resources. The hopes which accompanied the reforms of the early fifties have been dashed on the disappointments of the sixties (Quarterly Journal of Administration, April 1969,pp.169-170).

A tremendous similarity exists, therefore, between Nigeria and Britain with respect to the whole language of discourse about local government, its problems, its reorganization and prospects. This is not surprising since most of the advocates of reorganization in Nigeria not only studied in Britain, but are also very attentive to developments in the latter country and have often tried to transplant facets of British local government to Nigeria. Moreover, political scientists in Britain, like their counterparts all over the world, have come to appreciate the essence of comparative studies, and this has led some of them into research about local government in Nigeria. In both countries, therefore, there has been a lot of writing about the need for efficiency and the virtues of local self-government, and advocates of reorganization have long been concerned with the calibre of their elected representatives and with the implications of this for services and expenditure. Furthermore, in both countries there has been anxiety about the inefficiency caused by the presence of too many too small authorities, and fragmentation in the overall system and within individual local authorities has been pointed to as harmful and as a problem needing



solution.

#### CRITIQUE

Several attempts were made before the seventies to reform local government in both countries. The belief that the functioning of local government was highly unsatisfactory led to a plethora of committees and commissions set up to inquire into different aspects of local government, such as the Maud and Mallaby Committees on people in local government, the Allen Committee on the impact of rates, the Local Government Commissions on areas and authorities in England and Wales, the Herbert Commission on Local Government in Greater London, and then the Royal Commission on Local Government in England. In Nigeria, too, abortive attempts were made in the early sixties and between 1968 and 1971 through committees of inquiry such as the Benue/Plateau State Reform Panel, Kano State Committee for Local Government Reform, and Kwara State Advisory Committee for Local Government Reform, to reorganize the system of local government. These attempts, however, led to further centralization and the consequent weakening of local administration.

We have said that the defects analysed by the Royal Commission (1966-69) and the Federal Government in its Guidelines for Local Government Reform (1976) were nothing new but were mere compilations of criticisms which had become bitter since the Second World War in Britain and especially in the sixties in both countries. The Commission was unanimous in the view that 'local government in England needed a new structure and a new map'. It was 'in a sense a random growth' which had 'not been planned systematically in the light of what it has to do and the social and geographical conditions of each place'. The Commission diagnosed the following basic defects in the structure at that time:

(a) The division of town and country, what the Commission called "the most fatal defect in the present system" (para.85). The 'present' structure

failed to recognize the inter-dependence of town and country which increased with the growth in personal mobility. "People from the countryside came into the towns for shopping, entertainment, higher education and many professional services; people who work in towns increasingly live out in the country and commute; people who live in the towns increasingly go out to the country for recreation" (para.86).

(b) the division of responsibility between counties and county boroughs had built up a legacy of boundary ambitions and fears, and created a division of interest between the two types of authority. According to the Commission, "the fragmentation of England into 79 county boroughs and 45 counties, each with its own independent authority concerned with its own interests, has made the proper planning of development and transportation impossible" (para.87);

(c) there was a division of responsibility within the counties themselves; county councils were frustrated in the exercise of their power by county districts' responsibility for related functions. And within any county the pattern of responsibility was uneven, the larger county districts had more powers than the smaller in certain aspects. This defect is more clearly set out in the findings of the Seebohm Committee on Local Government and Allied Personal Social Services (1968, paras.676 and 681);

(d) the inadequate size of many local authorities measured in terms of population, area, or financial resources, led to lack of highly qualified manpower and technical equipment;

(e) the relationship between local authorities and the public was unsatisfactory. Here the Commission drew mainly upon studies previously carried out for the Committee on the Management of Local Government (1967);

(f) the relationship between central and local government was simply 'wrong' (para.100). In the Commission's view central government should

settle priorities for services of national importance, establish minimum standards, broadly determine the allocation of resources, establish priorities, operate checks on costs and quality and resolve inter-authority and citizen-authority disputes (Royal Commission on Local Government in England, 1969, Vol.1, pp.25-32).

Although there was no official thesis on the defects of local government in Nigeria comparable to the Royal Commission's report, critics nevertheless diagnosed similar malaise to those above. These defects were:

- (a) Confusion arising as to the proper status, functions and the best organizational framework of the local government, that is, whether the local government system was a rival government to the regional/state government claiming the loyalty and duties of the people or whether it should be based on the principles of decentralization or deconcentration of powers;
- (b) inefficiency, ineffectiveness and waste arising from the poor supporting facilities such as staff, funds and equipment at the disposal of the local government;
- (c) corruption and malpractices arising from the lack of identification and moral involvement with the local government system as an instrument of development at the local level;
- (d) partisanship arising from the election and/or appointment of local government representatives on political party/tribal lines. This led to the tendency of successful candidates trying to 'recover' their expenditure on election through corrupt practices; and the ruling party withholding the grants of local government belonging to the opposition. Furthermore, partisanship was alleged to have led to further centralization and therefore the charge that councillors were unresponsive to their electorate;
- (e) too many too small authorities which made it impossible to generate

necessary fund with which to employ qualified staff and execute projects. Thus, the councillors and local government workers were said to be men of poor quality who were inefficient. And because they were inefficient and ineffective, many of their functions and powers were transferred to the Government or corporations.

These defects were summarized by the Chief of Staff Supreme Headquarters, Brigadier Yar'Adua:

Local governments have, over the years, suffered from the continuous whittling down of their powers. The State Governments have continued to encroach upon what would normally have been the exclusive preserves of Local Government. Lack of adequate funds and appropriate institutions had continued to make Local Government ineffective and ineffectual. Moreover the staffing arrangements to ensure a virile local government system had been inadequate. Excessive politicking had made even modest progress impossible. Consequently, there has been a divorce between the people and government institutions at their most basic levels (Guidelines, 1976, foreword).

For the sake of our analysis here, we will reduce the defects identified by the Redcliffe-Maud Commission and the Federal Government to four broad ones. First, there were too many too small authorities, lacking the areas, population and resources to provide the specialized staff, equipment and institutions needed by increasingly technical and complex services, and catchment areas were too small to provide the necessary standards of service to the growing numbers of minority groups needing public help. In northern Nigeria, however, it was felt that the native authorities were too big and therefore remote, undemocratic and 'ungovernable'.

Secondly, the existing areas of local government did not fit the facts of social life. The obsolete division of town and country took no account of their interdependency and in particular the division between county boroughs and counties 'builds into the system a division of interest where, in fact, there is a common interest'. In Nigeria, this problem was exacerbated not only by the indifference of the colonial masters to

urban development which was carried over to the post-independence era, but also the establishment of Government Residential Areas for the colonial administrators and their Nigerian successors, effectively segregates the 'country' areas from the chaotic township. Indeed, this fragmentation was said to be the fatal defect of local government. Suburbs were not governed by the towns from which they had emerged; conurbations, each now a single economic and social unit, were splintered into a variety of authorities, and urban districts were divorced from the rural districts whose core they composed. This administrative fragmentation was said to have damaged the provision of services to areas whose problems needed to be tackled comprehensively (Royal Commission on Local Government in England, 1969, Vol.1, paras.85-88).

Thirdly, it was believed that this fragmentation meant that the citizens did not feel that local government units reflected anything meaningful in their daily lives. Local government areas did not correspond to what they regarded as communities. And so they grew apathetic (Jones, 1973, p.155). And thus critics believed the division of local authorities into tiers (outside county boroughs) confused the electorate and led to their lack of interest in the activities of the authorities. This ignorance was not thought to be a sound basis for democracy.

Fourthly, the division of local government into competing authorities, unable to combine in a common front, and their inadequate areas (except in northern Nigeria), meant that the central government was increasing its control, and was likely to remove more functions from unreformed local government, leaving it with few important activities and increasingly unattractive to able people, either officials or members, to serve. This relates to the calibre of councillors and the local government staff. The low calibre of course meant that the authorities were ineffective and inefficient. These problems were said to be compounded by party politics

(see chapter 4) and corruption, especially in Nigeria. In Nigeria, the system was manipulated for party advantage. Its financial and professional viability was undermined as local government units were created to suit the electoral needs of political parties and as offices were filled as political rewards. By 1965 every council set up in 1952 had been suspended. Important local government functions were transferred to ad hoc bodies.

We shall now expand the critique of the existing system to see how the institutions of local government "have failed to enhance their capacity, to involve the public, to respond to local needs, or to administer effectively and responsibly the various local public services" (Quarterly Journal of Administration, April 1969, p.170).

#### LOCAL GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE

The boundary problem formed the mediety of local government defects while other problems as those pertaining to democracy, efficiency, central control and councillor calibre were spokes in the hub. For instance, the Redcliffe-Maud Commission considered the division of responsibility in the counties between the county and district authorities a great weakness in view of the need for a common rational approach to problems of planning and the integration of personal social services. Both the Nigerian Government's Guidelines and the reports of the Redcliffe-Maud Commission found the size of most local authorities inadequate for their responsibilities. They considered the relationship between local authorities and the public unsatisfactory, largely because the public found the system too complex and difficult to understand. A more comprehensible system would, they believed, result in more accessibility, interest, awareness, and involvement. Or as the Guidelines put it, reorganization will lead to a system which will not only "stimulate democratic self-government

and encourage initiative and leadership potential" but it will also bring about success through 'community responsiveness' and participation' (1976,foreword). Furthermore, they found the relationship between central and local government unsatisfactory because of the great heterogeneity of local authorities. Better mutual understanding and a clearer division of function and responsibility would be possible only if local authorities were fewer and stronger in resources and in their capacity to deal with community problems.

This intimate relationship is not only between the 'hub' and the 'spokes' but also among the 'spokes' themselves and which we are only separating for academic purposes. The inter-relationship among the defects can be demonstrated by the fact that central control is said to have increased because of local government inefficiency and ineffectiveness which in turn is a consequence of the poor calibre of the staff and councillors.

It was commonly believed that the structure of English local government, established at the end of the last century, was antiquated (Robson, 1966; Griffith,1966; Mackintosh,1968; Richards,1978; Pearce,1980). These critics believed that the symptoms of decay were the result of obsolete municipal structure which was quite unsuited for the tasks it was designed to perform. Thus the major problem of local government was identified as that of the boundary because they were felt to be inconsistent with modern needs and social necessities (Robson,1931,p.30).

To critics, local government in Nigeria before the 1976 reform were a medley of authorities lacking correspondence between their sizes and the financial and personnel resources required to provide and maintain services (Wraith,1972; Post,1968; Orewa,1968; Nemetz,1971; Adedeji and Rowland, 1972). They agreed that structural problems were at the centre of local government defects. Post (1968,p.102) argued that the local authorities

were corrupt, and inefficient because their sizes were too small to attract qualified personnel. Adejuyigbe concurs, saying that "the small sizes of the councils had important effects on their finances" and of course on their achievement (1972,p.403). Wraith takes his argument further and asserts that not only were they too small to be effective, but the 'tier' system was too complicated for a society that was largely illiterate:

...the system had no relevance to traditional forms, and that in particular the requirement that one local authority should collect the tax only to part with most of it to another, upon whom they might only look with favour, aroused deep suspicion and resentment (Wraith,1972,p.63).

Intense partisan politics in local government added to the boundary problem as politicians gerrymandered the councils for their political ends. In 1969, a journal's editorial comment said that local government in Nigeria would remain inefficient unless they "have sufficient size. It must be sufficiently large - in area, in population, and hence in potential fiscal and leadership resources - to develop programmes, employ competent administrative and professional staff, and to manage the variety of local services expected of a modern local government" (Quarterly Journal of Administration, April 1969,p.170).

### The Pre-Reform Structure

The pattern of local government in England and Wales was established by the Local Government Acts of 1888 and 1894. In the county boroughs a single authority was responsible for local services within the area. In the counties there was a two-tier system. Responsibility for some services was given to the county council, and other services were entrusted to county districts - non-county boroughs, urban districts, and rural districts. In rural districts certain functions were performed by parish councils or parish meetings. The Local Government Board (and later



the Minister of Health) was empowered, subject to Parliamentary confirmation, to confer county borough status on non-county boroughs and to extend the boundaries of county boroughs. The subsequent creation of new county boroughs and the enlargement of the original ones involved a considerable transfer of population, territory, and financial resources from administrative counties to county boroughs.

As of 1972 the local authorities in England and Wales comprised:

|                                 |   |                                       |
|---------------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|
| 58 County Councils              |   |                                       |
| 82 County Borough Councils      |   |                                       |
| 276 Non-county Borough Councils | } | A total of 1,298<br>District Councils |
| 548 Urban District Councils     |   |                                       |
| 474 Rural District Councils     |   |                                       |
| About 7,500 Parish Councils     |   |                                       |
| About 3,400 Parish Meetings     |   |                                       |

This did not include Greater London, which had the Greater London Council, 32 London Borough Councils and the City Corporation.

The disparity in population of each type of local authority is very glaring if we classify them according to population as in Table 5.1

The differences in population among the areas of the same constitutional class were almost grotesque. The counties ranged from Lancashire with more than two and a quarter million, to Rutland with less than thirty thousand. The West Riding of Yorkshire had 1,696,220 inhabitants, as against Westmorland with 66,950. The Welsh counties varied from Glamorganshire with more than 750,000 to Randnorshire with less than 20,000. Even if we omit the extreme, there were large differences of population in the middle ranges.

This disparity was not limited to counties alone. For example, the county boroughs of Birmingham had a population of well over a million,

**TABLE 5.1: POPULATION, NUMBER AND TYPE OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES  
IN ENGLAND AND WALES, 1964.**

| POPULATION               | NUMBER   |
|--------------------------|--|
| 1,000,000+               | 4 County Councils<br>1 County Borough Council  |
| 500,000 to<br>1,000,000  | 14 County Councils<br>3 County Borough Councils  |
| 250,000<br>to<br>500,000 | 15 London Borough Councils<br>17 County Councils<br>10 County Borough Councils   |
| 100,000<br>to<br>250,000 | 17 London Borough Councils<br>14 County Councils<br>33 County Borough Councils<br>1 Non-County Borough Council<br>2 Urban District Councils<br>2 Rural District Councils |
| 50,000<br>to<br>100,000  | 5 County Councils<br>34 County Borough Councils<br>45 Non-County Borough Councils<br>17 Urban District Councils<br>27 Rural District Councils                            |
| 20,000<br>to<br>50,000   | 3 County Councils<br>1 County Borough Council<br>94 Non-County Borough Councils<br>130 Urban District Councils<br>164 Rural District Councils                            |
| 10,000<br>to<br>20,000   | 1 County Council<br>53 Non-County Borough Councils<br>162 Urban District Councils<br>160 Rural District Councils   |
| 5,000<br>to<br>10,000    | 38 Non-County Borough Councils<br>129 Urban District Councils<br>82 Rural District Councils  |
| 1,000<br>to<br>5,000     | 44 Non-County Borough Councils<br>104 Urban District Councils<br>39 Rural District Councils  |
| Below 1,000              | 1 Non-County Borough Council<br>4 Urban District Councils  |

Source: Registrar-General's Population Estimates for mid-1964.

Liverpool nearly 750,000, while Canterbury had slightly over 30,000, Dudley below 65,000 and Gloucester 70,000. The non-county boroughs ranged from towns like Swindon, Cambridge and Poole, all approaching the hundred thousand mark, or Rhondda which just exceeded it, to tiny pockets like Bishops Castle in Shropshire or Eye in Suffolk with less than 2,000 inhabitants. The urban districts ranged from Basildon with a population of 103,000 to Saxmundham with only 1,500.

Similar anomalies also occurred in their territorial size, with a large county covering about 1,649,401 acres as against the Holland Division of Lincolnshire with 267,847 acres. Among the non-county boroughs, Keighley had an acreage of 23,640 as against 157 acres for Woodstock. These same territorial anomalies permeated into the rural and urban districts, as we can see in Table 5.2.

TABLE 5.2:      SIZE, NUMBER AND TYPE OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN  
ENGLAND AND WALES, 1965\*

| TERRITORIAL SIZE             | NUMBER AND TYPE OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES   |
|------------------------------|--|
| Below 1,000 Acres            | 11 Non-County Borough Councils<br>40 Urban District Councils   |
| 1,000 to<br>1,999 Acres      | 43 Non-County Borough Councils<br>87 Urban District Councils   |
| 2,000<br>to<br>2,999 acres   | 1 County Borough Council<br>43 Non-County Borough Councils<br>80 Urban District Councils<br>2 Rural District Councils    |
| 3,000<br>to<br>4,999 Acres   | 11 County Borough Councils<br>73 Non-County Borough Councils<br>143 Urban District Councils<br>2 Rural District Councils |
| 5,000<br>to<br>9,999 Acres   | 41 County Borough Councils<br>83 Non-County Borough Councils<br>128 Urban District Councils<br>5 Rural District Councils |
| 10,000<br>to<br>14,999 Acres | 13 County Borough Councils<br>10 Non-County Borough Councils<br>23 Urban District Councils<br>5 Rural District Councils  |
| 15,000<br>to<br>19,000 Acres | 7 County Borough Councils<br>5 Non-County Borough Councils<br>21 Urban District Councils<br>9 Rural District Councils    |

Table 5.2: continued.

| TERRITORIAL SIZE             | NUMBER AND TYPE OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES  |
|------------------------------|---|
| 20,000<br>to<br>29,999 Acres | 6 County Borough Councils<br>5 Non-County Borough Councils<br>4 Urban District Councils<br>38 Rural District Councils |
| Over 30,000 Acres            | 3 County Borough Councils<br>2 Urban District Councils<br>405 Rural District Councils                                 |

\* Excluding county councils and GLC area.

Source: Municipal Yearbook, 1965.

Although one is not advocating for uniformity of size and population among the local authorities in each category, but the disproportionate sizes were too pronounced. Critics like Maddick (1963,p.115), Richards (1973,p.34) and Robson (1972,Vol.1p.74) believe that each category must have a minimum and maximum size if they must perform their duties efficiently and effectively. The implications of these disproportionate sizes and populations were that inefficiency and duplication became the order of the day. Also, it would have been impossible, for instance, for Birmingham with over a million people and Gloucester (70,000) to have proportionate and comparable financial resources such as rateable facilities. These ranges in sizes and population led critics to believe that a number of local authorities were too small to perform with tolerable efficiency and economy the functions devolved on them. The Labour Party asserted that "there are too many local authorities, the majority of which are too small..... too many authorities lack the population and rate revenue necessary to provide essential services" (1942,pp.5-6; see also, Sharpe, 1965,p.11; Redcliffe-Maud and Wood,1974,pp.24-31). Robson agrees and argues that "just as the technique of industrial and commercial administration now

requires far larger units of authority than formerly, so does the technique of efficient municipal administration now demand more extensive units of local government" (1931,p.125). The Local Government Boundary Commission argued that "a single large unit should be able to achieve economies in terms of manpower and money more easily than several smaller ones" (1947,para.24). The Royal Commission on Local Government in England (1966-69) did not doubt the wisdom of one of its predecessors since they also considered it "clear that larger authorities offer advantages of specialization in staff and institutions" (1969,Vol.1,p.59).

The alleged inefficiency however has greater root in the changes which occurred in the society, than in the structure itself. This assertion is made up of three ingredients. First, the socio-economic and political changes that have taken place in the 20th century Britain have been enormous (see chapters 3 and 4). Second, "as the services run by local authorities have increased in number and importance, (so) the problem of securing a high level of modern efficiency has also increased" (Jackson, 1963,p.207). Third, in the face of these two changes the overall structure of local government has remained unchanged in its essentials. In other words things have not so much gone wrong with local government; it is more the case that local government has just failed to adapt to 'new problems' and 'new duties' (Local Government in England and Wales During the Period of Reconstruction,1945,p.3). In effect, a stable governmental structure has been described as inefficient in the face of social and economic change. Governmental authority has remained 'fragmented' while the growing conurbations enjoy an economic and social integration. 'Lilliputian organizations' were seen as no longer up to the task of managing the technical means of satisfying the everyday needs of those who lived in the great cities (Green,1959,p.17). The answer to our hypothetical question is unfolding now: Was reform necessary because

changing social values could no longer be realised through an outdated administrative system? The much talked about values can be reduced to 'democracy' and 'efficiency'. And as we have demonstrated, the changes are enormous. New methods of transport which arose from the introduction of the petrol engine set up an overflow of population from the towns, resulting in an enormous expansion of their suburbs. A large number of people now work in one area and live in another. These people have to be provided with many services by the city in which they work, but most of them pay rates only to the council of the area in which they live.

This artificial division between country and town not only became blurred and unrealistic but was also a constant source of rivalry between the authorities. One of such local conflicts was between the counties and county boroughs over proposals by the former to bring within their boundaries the 'overspill' areas into which their populations had moved out, a course resisted by the county councils because it meant a loss of prestige, catchment area and rateable value to them. Because of these and other problems, the areas and populations of local authorities remained small and they were therefore deemed inefficient (see, Simon, 1926, p. 216).

Convinced, therefore, that small areas can never have the necessary resources to perform satisfactorily, commentators started praising the efficiency of larger areas. Griffith (1966) believes that the arguments in favour of larger local authorities are many, various and strong and the Royal Commission on Local Government in England (1966-69) received a number of evidences calling for larger areas because, as one of them points out, "small-scale operations in refuse disposal are uneconomic and inconvenient in various ways" and, more generally, they argued on, "a small authority is less likely to possess modern plant, equipment or specialist appliances.... (has) less room for new developments in services.... (and) little margin for unexpected contingencies" (Written Evidence of the Ministry of Housing and

Local Government, Research Study 10, 1969, pp. 38, 51). Robson also believed that "one of the most cogent reasons for requiring larger.... units of local administration is that the present muddle produces a strong tendency to centralization" (1931, p. 60).

In a word, the Redcliffe-Maud Commission subscribed to the 'doctrine of the minimum size for an efficient authority'. It is interesting to know that the Minister who appointed the Commission "had no doubt that an impartial body would support his contention that larger units were needed" (Morton, 1970, p. 17), and the Commission itself in considering "proposals for a new structure started from the basis that most existing units are too small for the provision of the main services" (1969, Vol. 1, p. 42).

Local government structure was even more chaotic in Nigeria (Fadahunsi, 1977). The coming of regional self-government in the early fifties provided an impetus to the interest in local government structure and administration in each of the three regions. In the south, the native authorities were replaced (in the east, as a result of the Local Government Ordinance of 1950; in the west, following the Local Government Law of 1952) by English-style county or divisional, district and local councils. The governing bodies were wholly elected in the Eastern Region and three-quarters elected, and one quarter titled members in the Western Region. The district and local councils were not subordinate, but co-ordinate with the larger (divisional and county) jurisdictions within whose boundaries many, but not all, were located. In the north, the Native Authority Law of 1954 replaced the sole chief with the chief-in-council, but the traditional districts and village groups/villages remained as subordinate administrative organs of the native authority.

Thus, prior to the 1976 reform, there was no uniformity of structure among the local governments in Nigeria. Every region (later state) established and operated its system of local government. Not only did

critics believe that the structure was ill-defined and chaotic, but they also believed that the local authorities except in the north, were too small in area and population to be efficient. To them, it was impossible to survey the facts of local government without becoming convinced that there was a great multitude of minor authorities covering areas so inadequate, possessing such small populations and with so limited financial resources that with the best will in the world, they had neither the capacity nor the means to exercise in a satisfactory manner the powers conferred on them. Wraith (1972) believes that the main characteristics of local government in Nigeria was the utter lack of symmetry or system under which it was carried on. Fadahunsi, Orewa, Wraith and a host of other critics concluded that local government in Nigeria consisted of numerous Lilliputian authorities "sans population, sans money, sans knowledge, often sans staff" (Robson, 1931, p.45) and almost sans existence.

Local government structure problem in Nigeria was compounded by illiteracy and politics. "The ordinary man tends to see local government in terms of local feuds, traditional rivalries, and distrust of neighbouring towns or communities with whom he is unwilling to share his own resources, and whom he suspects of getting more than their fair share of benefits; not only does he not want his council to combine with others - he would like it to become still smaller; and the politicians often back him up" (Wraith, 1972, p.63).

Thus the argument about the size of local authorities in Nigeria, as in Britain, can be reduced to three spheres. First, small authorities are seen as unable to secure the services of councillors and officers of high calibre. Orewa provides evidence to support his claim that none of the small authorities in Bendel State was "able to employ a qualified technical officer to supervise the construction and maintenance of its roads



and bridges" (1968,p.231). Second, small authorities are seen as unable to secure the benefits that are alleged to derive from economies of scale. Orewa concludes that "the per capita expenditure on administration and law and order were on the average lower in larger councils than in the smaller councils" (1968,p.224). Third, and related to the second one, small authorities cannot secure the benefits of specialization and division of labour whereby competent specialists are employed for particular tasks, as it is difficult to justify the employment of the range of necessary specialists unless the case load is large (Wraith,1972,p.84).

The scale of the local authorities activities varied greatly from place to place and it was in the north that their influence was greatest. Before the reorganization into states, local authorities varied in size of population between 2,000 and three million, and their ordinary revenues from £10,000 to over £2 million. The large authorities such as Kano, Sokoto and Katsina made their own provision for public services - electricity, water etc - and had full responsibility for the policing of their area and maintaining their prisons. Kano Native Authority, for instance, spent over £2 million a year and employed over 5,000 salaried personnel, and supported a modern hospital with over 300 beds. The native authorities acted as the agents of the regional government in implementing regional welfare and works programmes in their localities. To execute these programmes, some of the richer authorities employed their own expatriate staff. In fact it used to be said with some truth that before the reorganization into states that if the central government collapsed in the north, the native authorities would carry on the administration of the region, whereas if the native authorities collapsed there would be complete disaster (Hicks,1961,pp.180-181; Smith,1967,p.40).

Things were different in the other two regions where the system of native authorities had been taken over by the introduction of local

government institutions on the English model. These local government authorities, however, were neither as large nor regarded as efficient as the great emirates of the north. In 1953-4, for example, the total ordinary expenditure of all the local treasuries in the Western Region was under £2 million, the largest being Ibadan with £278,484, and the amount in the east was even less. Many of the local authorities in the south used to spend about £2,000 and hardly employed anybody outside their small office staff.

In a nutshell, the population and resources of the local authorities were regarded as too small to allow them to be effective except within a very narrow range, consisting mainly of minor roads and small dispensaries. Thus by 1958, there were 132 'tiny' local authorities in the Western Region. These were made up of 14 Divisional Councils, 9 All-purpose District Councils, 58 Districts and 51 Local Councils (Western State of Nigeria, 1971,p.10). Critics therefore believed that the pre-1976 reform attempts were not done on the grounds of logic or equity. They were not inspired by any general principles except for political gains. Yet as we said in chapter 1 (see also chapter 8), administrative reform should be both a political and a management process; and for administrative reform to be meaningful, therefore, it must allow for both its political and managerial elements. In Nigeria, only the political aspect was emphasized. The councils were created to give "a measure of local independence to groups of villages" (Western State of Nigeria,1971,p.4) and to allow the politicians to win elections. The same process of fragmentation took place in the east and by 1960 there were 107 local authorities.

Adejuyigbe (1972) believes that the small size of the councils had important effects on their finance, efficiency, democracy and councillor/officer calibre. He asserts that many of them could not raise enough revenue to pay their staff. They were unable to engage people to

perform many of the functions expected of them. To back up his assertion he gives the example of Ifetedo Local Council in Ife Division which was unable to engage labourers for road works during the 1970/71 financial year. "Some of the provisional authorities in Akoko were unable to provide funds for drugs in their dispensaries in certain years - in 1967/70 Akoko East Provisional Authority could only provide £8 for drugs for use in its dispensaries" (Adejuyigbe, 1972, p.403). This was a classical example, highly representative of local government in Nigeria, especially in the west and east. Even in the north where local authorities were usually larger, richer and believed to be more efficient, my native authority, Yagba, had only £110 in its treasury in 1965.

Furthermore, local government units did not reflect anything meaningful in the daily lives of the citizens because they did not fit the facts of social life. What the citizens regarded as communities did not correspond to the areas of local authorities. This is believed to be responsible for their apathy (Wraith, 1972). Moreover, the majority of the electorate, who at any rate are illiterates, were confused by the 'tier' system of local government. The Western Region, for instance, had the Local Council which was generally not a rating authority; it was usually associated with a larger council which collected the rates. The rating authority then paid an annual grant to the local council to meet its expenses. But local council taxpayers were not willing to pay taxes to outsiders.

All the problems of local government remained unsolved despite the declared intention of the Military Government in 1966 to reform the system. A year after the creation of twelve states in 1967, the promised reform was launched and by 1970 the Federal Military Government's proposals were implemented. The result was the familiar pattern of non-uniformity in local government. In 1972 the Western State (now Ogun, Ondo and Oyo states) reformed its own local government system by adopting a modified version of

the American city-manager plan, introducing a one-tier system, removing the traditional rulers from local government affairs, and directing that 40 per cent of local revenue raised annually should be used for local development efforts. In Bendel State (formerly Midwest), local governments were abolished in 1974 when the state government promulgated the Development Administration Edict. This edict introduced a two-tier structure of Development Councils and Development Committees in what it called the 'development administration system' (Government of the Midwest State of Nigeria, 1974). The new system resulted in the deconcentration of state ministries to the field and the appointment of a civil servant (Resident) as the head of the entire government operation in each administration division. Members of the development councils and development committees were selected by the state government.

In 1972 the East Central State (now Imo and Anambra states) introduced a two-tier prefectoral system tailored on the French model. Under what it called 'divisional administration', direct control of the system by the state cabinet and the military governor was exercised through state-appointed divisional officers. In the South Eastern State (now Cross River state), the new system of field administration was directly controlled by the Ministry of Development Administration, while only advisory and tax collecting roles were assigned to the traditional authorities. In Rivers state, the government also centralised the functions of local administration under the state ministry.

In the northern states, the local government reform of 1972 replaced the extant native authorities by local government authorities, and reorganized the native authority system by establishing in their place 'Administrative' or 'Development Areas' which were mutually independent but directly related to the local government authority and the State Governments. The roles of the state bureaucracies were increased while the position and

powers of the emir in local government was watered down. These reform attempts failed because they were done primarily for political reasons. They led to increased centralization of local government powers and functions (see chapter 4).

Thus by 1976 there was still a huge disparity in population, area, and revenue of local authorities as presented in Table 5.3. The disparity in population was pronounced. In Kano State, for example, they ranged from Kano with a population of 4,747,065 to Gumel with a little more than a quarter of a million. In the North-Eastern State, Bornu Local Government had 1,971,870 inhabitants, as against Jama'are with 6,000. In the North-Western State they varied from Sokoto Local Government with more than 3 million people to Lapai with just 100,000. In the Western State the differences were equally grotesque. They varied from Ogbomosho Local Government with 343,279 to Ilara with 1,113 inhabitants (Western State of Nigeria, 1972, p.87).

Similar anomalies also occurred in their territorial size. In Kwara State for example, Ilorin Local Government covered an area of 2,110 square miles as against Oyun with 258 square miles. In the North-Western State, Sokoto had a square mileage of 25,608 as against Lapai with just 2,587 square miles. In the North-Eastern State, they ranged from over 32,000 square miles (Bornu) to just about 150 square miles (Jama'are). And in the Western State they ranged from Oyo Local Government with 7,927 square miles to Epe Local Government with only 466 square miles.

The implications of these disproportionate sizes and populations were that inefficiency and duplication became rampant. Also, it would have been impossible, for instance, for Katsina with over two and a quarter million people and Birnin Gwari (29,798) to have proportionate and comparable financial resources. Thus while Katsina Local Authority had almost half a

TABLE 5.3: POPULATION, AREA, NUMBER OF TAXPAYERS AND TOTAL RECURRENT REVENUE OF SOME LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN NORTHERN NIGERIA: 1973/4

| STATE     | L. AUTHORITY            | AREA IN<br>SQUARE<br>MILES | POPULATION<br>(1963 Census) | NUMBER OF<br>TAXPAYERS | TOTAL RECURRENT<br>REVENUE (NAIRA) |
|-----------|-------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------------|
| B/PLATEAU | Wukari<br>Langtang      | 6,223<br>1,927             | 285,646<br>80,092           | 37,596<br>9,487        | 352,180<br>88,760                  |
| KANO      | Kano<br>Gumel           | 12,933<br>1,205            | 4,747,065<br>263,733        | 838,731<br>36,608      | 3,091,560<br>228,660               |
| KWARA     | Ilorin<br>Oyun          | 2,110<br>258               | 504,124<br>114,090          | 77,265<br>7,464        | 535,720<br>120,740                 |
| N/CENTRAL | Katsina<br>Birnin Gwari | 8,500<br>n.a.              | 2,286,032<br>29,798         | 418,475<br>97          | 2,699,700<br>46,066                |
| N/EASTERN | Bornu<br>Jama'are       | 32,005<br>149              | 1,971,870<br>6,000          | 321,371<br>5,819       | 3,246,120<br>51,514                |
| N/WESTERN | Sokoto<br>Lapai         | 25,608<br>2,587            | 3,213,017<br>101,937        | 503,426<br>7,615       | 4,452,620<br>64,330                |

Source: LOCAL GOVERNMENT YEAR BOOK 1973/74:  
THE NORTHERN STATES OF NIGERIA, 1974, pp.22-24; 65-70.

million taxpayers, Birnin Gwari had only 97, and the total recurrent revenue of the former was 77 times more than that of the latter. Kano Local Authority had a total recurrent revenue of N3,091,560 while Gumel could only muster N228,660. In the North-Eastern State the local authorities' revenues ranged from Bornu with N3,246,120 to Jama'are with N51,514. Prior to the 1976 reform, therefore, variation in the expenditure and development potential of local authorities remained as wide as when Dr.B.C.Smith first noted that:

While Bornu and Kano Native Authorities plan to develop medical services by capital expenditure amounting to £139,000 and £141,695 respectively for the period 1962-1968, Jama'are and Kamabu plan expenditures of £1,000 and £100. Other extremes include £54,708 (Kano) and £200 (Lafiagi) on agriculture, and £358,052 (Kano) and £500 (Jama'are) on communications (1967,p.39).

Thus many local authorities were regarded as too restricted geographically and administratively to be fully effective. "The majority of the councils have no plans, staff or funds to reseal the Provincial and District roads which were tarred for them by the Government in the first instance" (Orewa, 1963,pp.12-13). Adejuyigbe concludes that "the economic inviability of the councils makes them unable to attract qualified staff or ensure them the security of tenure necessary for progressive administration" (1972,p.405). The Government's official Guidelines concur with these critics and declare that "lack of adequate funds and appropriate institutions had continued to make local government ineffective and ineffectual" (1976,foreword).

#### THE TOWN AND COUNTRY CRISIS

Another diagnosis of critics and the Redcliffe-Maud Commission is that there was a 'fatal' division between town and country, established by the 1888 and 1894 Acts. This division is said to be artificial, certainly against the new age symbolised by the motor car, which leads to "the huge tidal wave of population which sweeps in and out of many large

cities every morning and evening" (Robson, 1931, p. 97). This division of town and country is believed by Robson and a host of other critics to be too fertile a ground for conflict for the health of local government. And the Royal Commission (1966-69) agrees that "local government areas no longer correspond to the pattern of life and work in England. Population has long since over-run many of the old boundaries" (1969, Vol. 1, para. 85). This division, it is argued, should be abolished and town and country linked in entities like the proposed city regions. "The opposition of county councils to the efforts of non-county boroughs to obtain county borough status, and the attempts of existing county boroughs to enlarge their boundaries, constitutes the forms in which this conflict between town and country has usually been manifested during recent decades" (Robson, 1931, p. 76; for an illustration, see maps 12-15 in the folder accompanying Volume III of the Royal Commission's Report, 1969). The effect of this division was that no single authority was responsible for thinking about the totality of related services and their adequacy, about the community as a whole. Thus counties and county districts were not regarded as proper units of self-government, but as providers of services.

Half-hearted piecemeal attempts were made to solve the town-country problem and the chaotic relationship between counties and county boroughs on the one hand, and the county councils and the county districts on the other. The Local Government (County Boroughs and Adjustments) Act 1926 raised the qualifying population level from 50,000 as provided for in the 1888 Act to 75,000 and provided that the status could only be granted by Local Private Act. The Local Government Act 1958 further raised the qualifying level to 100,000 and placed a ban on the promotion of Local Private Acts for 15 years. Under this Act, however, a comprehensive review of the status and areas of all local authorities was set in train through the



agency of a Local Government Commission.

Hart (1966) believes, like Robson (1966) and Warren (1963) that reform was urgently needed to resolve the problem between town and country; between the conurbations and the regions. The conflict between town and country further reduced efficiency, they claim, because petty jealousy hindered vital policy making. The problem of who to decide what and who to do what always became an excuse to do nothing.

### The Conurbations and the Regions

Because of the alleged untidy planning and structure, Sir William Hart believed that the conurbations are "the aggregations of urban development which have spread without the benefit of planning to guide their growth" (1966,p.128). He believed that a number of areas, such as Greater London, have growth mainly from one centre, "spreading in concentric rings with untidy fingers of development stretching further along the main lines of communication" (1966,p.128). The result, he said, was a jumble of local authority areas with accidentally interlocking boundaries dividing authorities of differing status, powers and resources which led to public uncertainty and confusion (Hart,1966,p.129).

Attempts to solve these problems through joint committees produced little result. Joint boards were established to administer some services, especially those like sewage and sewerage disposal, where the physical necessities of geography take little heed of local authority boundaries. Joint police authorities were also constituted in some cases; often arrangements were made for one authority to provide a service, such as the supply of water, in the area of its neighbours. Yet when all this had been done, the conurbations remained from a critical point of view, 'untidy', 'inconvenient' and 'inefficient' when compared with what might

be the case.

A clear example is the first post-war step towards reorganization of local government when the Government set up a Local Government Boundary Commission. After two years' experience, particularly as related to the conurbations, the Commission concluded that their powers were inadequate. They could only consider the alteration of areas and of the existence and status of individual local authorities; they could not make recommendations affecting the distribution of functions among local authorities. They could not propose the creation of a new unit of local authority or the modification of the group of functions which any recognised unit exercised. Thus because the government was not ready to grant the Commission extra powers, it was wound up in 1949.

After this Commission came a flurry of other commissions. The 1958 Local Government Act set up two commissions, one for England and the other for Wales. Greater London had been excluded from the scope of the Local Government Boundary Commission, but in 1957 the Royal Commission on Local Government in Greater London 1957-60 (the Herbert Commission) was appointed "to examine the present system and working of local government in the Greater London area; to recommend whether, any, and if so what, changes in the local government structure and the distribution of local authority functions in the area, or in any part of it, would better secure effective and convenient local government" (1960,p.1). The Report of the Commission was largely accepted and implemented in the 1963 Local Government Act.

The problem of town-country dichotomy was very serious in Nigeria also. Improved medical facilities and better standards of living consequent upon socio-economic and political changes lowered the rate of mortality, and led to a population explosion. The shift from agriculture to industry and commerce, and the availability of amenities and opportunities (hospitals, schools, colleges, pipe borne water, jobs, electricity etc.) led to the

movement of Nigerians from the rural areas to the towns and thus accelerated urbanization. Not only was the urban area the abode of modernist Nigerians and the centre for their modernizing activities, it had come to assume a determinate and decisive role on Nigerian social, economic and political life, dictating the pace of social progress and infusing the cultural mien with an ever more complex and intricate pattern. The cities, especially the administrative and commercial centres such as Kano, Kaduna, Ibadan, Enugu and Lagos, 'burst' their traditional boundaries and created spatial, physical and administrative problems. The confusing and illogical separation of town and country spread to other towns, especially state capitals, with the creation of 12 states in 1967 (19 states, 1976).

Kano city, for example, had a population of 131,000 in 1953. This rose to 415,000 in 1967 and by 1975 Kano was a city of 600,000, giving it an estimated annual growth of 8.9 per cent. Kano is a sprawling, spacious place, comprising the ancient city, modern 'township' ('Sabon Gari') and commercial centre, international airport, seat of Kano State Government and subsidiary townships. Like other Nigerian towns, population explosion and urbanization led to serious problems such as traffic congestion, breakdown of public services and shortage of housing in Kano. So far as local administration was concerned, it was a tangle of authorities with the city separated administratively from its suburbs despite their social and economic interdependence. The local authorities consisted of the old and powerful Kano Native Authority which was renamed the Local Government Authority in 1968, its subordinate authority for the Old City, the Waje Town Council, an administrative officer in charge of the modern commercial part of the city and many ad hoc authorities. An attempt was made in 1962 to reorganize the tangle of local authorities into a more rational kind of organization. This attempt led to the establishment of a Kano Greater

Planning Authority, which was replaced in 1969 by the Metropolitan Planning and Development Board which assumed planning powers for the whole of Greater Kano.

Kaduna, the old Capital Territory of the Northern Region and since 1967 a state capital, is the fastest growing city in Nigeria, with an estimated annual growth of 11.2 per cent. As Kaduna Capital Territory and a modern town, it had the advantage of more spacious and far-sighted planning: that is, the Territory covered a 5-mile radius from the city centre. In 1975 Kaduna was a city of 202,000 people. Despite the far-sighted planning, Kaduna had become, in the seventies, an 'ungovernable' city because of the high rate of urban growth (Wraith, 1972, p.144). It had 'burst out' of its 5-mile radius yet the suburb was administratively distinct from the city in spite of their social and economic interdependence. Uncontrolled growth, slums, pollution, congestion, and the breakdown of public services through over-strain had become as acute in Kaduna as anywhere else in the country (Wraith, 1972, p.144). A sign of hope for Kaduna, however, was the 50-year development plan which was approved in principle in 1970 and which effectively took off after 1976.

Ibadan is second to Lagos as the worst example in Nigeria of 'megapolis' - the city running riot with no one able to control it. Its problems are comparable to those of any other town in Nigeria: rural exodus, migrant unemployment, industrialization, lack of modern sewerage, lack of housing and planning, urban crime and poverty in the face of weak financial resources, limited administrative capability and inadequate infrastructure. These problems, like in other Nigerian cities, are aggravated by maladministration, malfeasance and corruption. Ibadan used to be the capital of the Western Region, and since 1967 a state capital. It was always firmly linked sociologically and economically

with the farming areas round about it, but this interdependence was ignored in the local administrative set up. The population of Ibadan increased considerably and this led to enormous expansion which created problems since the town and the countryside were separated administratively.

Lagos, as we have said, is the worst example of a megalopolis in Nigeria. It is one of the fastest growing cities of the world. The 1963 census gave Lagos a population of 665,000 within the formal city boundaries, but these had little relation to the real built-up area and it was calculated that another 425,000 ought to have been added to give the population of the continuous conurbation (Wraith,1972,p.140). By 1975, Lagos was estimated to have a population of about a million and a half, and population within the city limit was growing at about 8 per cent per annum while the urbanizing areas beyond it was 20 per cent. A critic has this to say of Lagos:

Growth had been unplanned and largely unforeseen and has gathered such momentum that it is impossible to halt or reverse it, and there seems no reason why by the end of the century the built-up area should not stretch ten miles inland.....The penalty that the public has to pay is constant failure of water and electricity, chaotic traffic, inadequate public transport, and tiring and expensive journeys to work (Wraith,1972,p.141).

The problems of local administration in Lagos, as was the case in England and Wales before the reforms of 1974 (London: 1963), derived from structures designed to meet the needs of simpler days, and which became largely obsolete. Furthermore, most Nigerian cities and towns were built or developed by the colonial masters for their own interests, and these bear no reality to present day Nigeria (Allen,1972,p.17). The Lagos Town (now City) Council is a body of long standing, but until the 1960s it was in essence a sanitary, public health and markets authority only; it then acquired other responsibilities, notably a bus service purchased from private enterprise and the administration of primary education. More recently still its social welfare and works programmes have greatly increased,

and its budget in 1975 was about £5½ million, four times what it was in 1965. Nevertheless it could not possibly undertake responsibility for providing the major public services or solving the major planning problems of the city. For many years the Ministry of Lagos Affairs of the Federal Government was responsible for the major roads and streets and the vital water supply, and has now been succeeded by the Lagos State Government; the Ports Authority is responsible for the city's most important undertaking; electricity is supplied by the National Electric Power Authority (NEPA); and the statutory corporation known as the Lagos Executive Development Board (LEDB), has been responsible for the huge undertaking of clearing the worst of the slums, replanning the city centre and creating new housing estates on the outskirts.

There were, therefore, five different 'agencies', all within the same geographical area, performing functions best suited to the different kinds of work and to the resources which each could muster. Unfortunately the division of labour between them, and their various areas of jurisdiction, have not kept pace with changing circumstances. Here is the familiar pattern of a growing city (from 300,000 in 1955 to 1,500,000 in 1975) pushing its tentacles into the area of neighbouring authorities, so that the time came when the statutory boundary had no relation to the real boundary and claims were made to extend it at the expense of its neighbours. Until the time of the civil war, progress towards a more rational organization was made difficult by the fact that the whole of Lagos outside the city boundary was within the former Western Region, which raised political, administrative and financial problems of great complexity (Jones and Keith-Lucas, 1963). As long ago as 1964 a United Nations team had proposed that the artificial separation of the city (Federal Government) from the built-up area outside (Western Regional Government) should be terminated, and

that a Greater Lagos Metropolitan Authority should operate over the whole conurbation in the manner of the LEDB, and that the then Lagos Town Council should act as a second-tier authority, also over the whole area (Koenigsberger et al, 1964). The creation of Lagos State reduced some of the problems but not the multiplicity of authorities over the whole area. The Federal Ministry of Lagos Affairs is now superseded by two state ministries Local Government and Chieftaincy Affairs for general purposes and Works and Planning for planning purposes, located at Ikeja, and the jurisdiction of the City Council and the LEDB remain unchanged. Outside the city boundary - in the territory taken over from the Western Region - urban planning is the responsibility of the Ikeja Planning Authority and there were before the 1976 reform, four 'divisional' local authorities for general purposes - Ikeja, Badagry, Epe and Ikorodu, all of which are so near the metropolis that they have become urbanized.

In Nigeria and Britain we have the universal problem of the growing city and its hinterland. The city boundary is always slow to catch up with the real area of the city, which has led in some parts of the world to the growth of what is usually called the 'City Region' - a ring thrown round the city sufficiently widely to anticipate future problems of urban growth and to solve them by a single authority, or at least a co-ordinated set of agencies. Before the 1974 and 1976 reforms in Britain and Nigeria respectively, local government areas no longer corresponded to the pattern of life and work. Population had long since over-run many of the old boundaries. The local government structure did not correspond to the realities of life because it failed to recognise the social and economic interdependence of town and country.

### The Race for County Borough Status

The structure of local government in Britain included two different types of local administration: single-tier all-purpose authorities in the county boroughs and two-tier arrangements in the administrative counties, with a special variety of two-tier government in London. This is in contrast to what obtained in Nigeria where there were no all-purpose local authorities in the midst of a two-tier system. At the turn of the century, when local government services in Britain were far less fully developed and when attention chiefly concentrated on the environmental problems of the urban areas, the two systems of local administration existed side by side without difficulty. But services expanded and county functions became more important; at the same time there was a steady stream of applications to establish new county boroughs or to extend existing ones and, inevitably, there was friction and rivalry between the counties and the county boroughs. Furthermore, the separate development of local government in the towns, largely because of public health and other problems there, had resulted in a divergence between the powers possessed by urban authorities as against those in rural areas - a divergence which was in due course to demand modification in times of greater mobility and more unified standards.

A number of critics, including George Jones (1963, pp.173-87; 1964, pp.277-90) advanced a number of reasons most important of which is the shift of population, to justify their call for enlarged county boroughs which would remove the 'unrealistic' division of town and country and lessen the rivalry between the counties and the county boroughs. In the report on the West Midlands Special Review Area, the Local Government Commission's Report says,



The county boroughs, representing the main urban centres, are losing population to the peripheral areas, where more land is available for building and people can get a house with a garden. Among the population which is lost in this way are the younger families, because these need accommodation with more space for children, and, more generally, the higher income groups. As a result, the county boroughs....are beginning to lose variety in the social and economic make-up of their populations (1961,p.19).

This view was orchestrated by the SSRC Bristol Conference Working Group on the Royal Commission (1969). Their research shows that the distribution of population, the pattern of industrial and other employment, have changed greatly.

Another reason advanced for the extension of county boroughs was the natural increase, that is, the excess of births over deaths, which is said to be much greater than was forecast 30 years ago. Moreover, there is an increase in the number of families wishing to have their own separate homes. From these causes, and from the universal desire for more spacious living, comes an increasing movement out from the older and more congested areas of towns to their fringes and to places well beyond. The net result, it is believed, is that the resident population of many county boroughs and large municipal boroughs is either falling, or is rising by far less than their natural increase, while the resident population of fringe areas is rising by much more than their natural increase. Jones (1963), Simon (1938,pp.399-405), and Hennock (1973,p.323) believed that these movements would lead to chaos because some people are living in a local government area while paying rates to another. They also believed that the movement from the centre of the towns would lead to 'decay', and create class consciousness because only the rich can afford to live in the quieter and more beautiful suburb.

These critics adduced reasons for the outward movement: growing affluence in the society; the bus, motor car and telephone; in many big towns a point of time has been reached when a great deal of densely

developed housing built in the mid-19th century, is now so worn out that it is having to be replaced, and municipal rehousing, commonly at lower densities and with consequent overspill, has become a big and immediate pressing task; and that council housing has produced an exodus because the number of displaced people cannot be all resettled due to roads, spacing for play, schools etc. Thus they came to the conclusion that a county borough in circumstances such as we have described was going to find itself in a more and more serious position if its boundaries remained unchanged, and that this must often outweigh the 'genuine factors' on the other side, such as the wishes of the inhabitants in the fringe area and the vigour of local government activity there.

Thus, it is said that the relationship between a town and its rural surroundings transcends purely social and economic inter-relationship. Towns provide a great many services, as the Royal Commission (1969, Vol.1, p.26) notes, for people in the suburb, such as shopping, hospitals, dental treatment, insurance, accountancy, further and higher education, recreation, entertainment and a host of other things. But it is not a one-way traffic: the countryside provides the city-dwellers with opportunities for recreation and certain types of employment.

As we have said before, there were attempts before the Royal Commission (1966-69) to reform the structure of local government in Britain and resolve the town and country crisis, and especially the county - county borough conflict. The 1958 Local Government Act, a product of a concordat between the Government and local authority associations, is a good example. The scope of the Commission was very restrictive. The 1956 White Paper said that there was "no convincing case for radically reshaping the existing form of local government in England and Wales. What is needed is to overhaul it and make such improvements as are necessary to bring it up to date"

(Local Government: Areas and Status of Local Authorities in England

and Wales, 1956). Thus the Local Government Act 1958 delineated five conurbations - Tyneside, West Yorkshire, South-East Lancashire, Merseyside and the West Midlands - outside Greater London and labelled them 'special review areas' and the remainder of England and the whole of Wales as 'general review areas'. The Commission could propose changes in the boundaries of the counties and county boroughs and/or abolish or create new ones, but it did not have the power to review functions. In the special review areas it could propose changes in the county districts, including abolishing or creating them or promote them. The Commission was also empowered to propose a 'continuous county', that is a county with no county boroughs within its boundaries. Likewise, it could propose the allocation of functions between the continuous county and the county districts within its boundaries.

The scope of the Commission was further restricted by the way it was asked to carry out its enquiry procedures. As Sharpe noted, "the Act clearly limits the scope of the Commission and the regulations however admirably democratic in intent, have made matters worse by enforcing it, as their reports amply testify, to devote much time and energy to the negative job of answering the objections of existing local authorities rather than the rigorous examination of the positive merits of reform" (1965, pp.21-22). And as Richards concludes, "the morass of procedure for dealing with objectors strangled any impetus in (the Commission's) work" (1978, p.37). The final stroke that broke the Commission's backbone was inflicted by the Minister of Housing and Local Government, Richard Crossman, a radical reformer who felt that

the whole structure of local government is out of date, that our county borough and county councils as at present organized are archaic institutions whose size and structure make them increasingly ill-adapted to fulfilling the immensely important functions with which they are charged. The greatest obstacle, in fact, which prevents efficient councils from retaining public confidence is the obsolete

constitutional framework within which they had to operate (1965,p.658).

In a nutshell, like the ill-fated Local Government Boundary Commission, the Local Government Commission (1958-65) could not achieve much because of the aforementioned cumbersome procedures. By 1966, the Commission was dissolved and replaced by the Royal Commission (1966-69). Before the 1974 reform, therefore, there were incremental changes but no significant structural reform. The boundaries remained largely as they were at the beginning of this century. Considerable transfer of functions took place from smaller to larger geographical units in the existing local government structure, and from local government to the central Government and ad hoc bodies. Central control over local government expanded and tightened, and was accompanied by immeasurably enlarged assistance from central funds. Moreover the allocation of functions to local authority had been piecemeal. Nobody seemed to examine the total effect on the system of population explosion, population mobility, urbanization and functional distribution, with the consequence that a number of local authorities had duties which they were ill-equipped to perform; and they lacked the scope and resources necessary to attract adequately trained staff and provide services at present day standards.

#### LOCAL COUNCILS, COUNCILLOR CALIBRE AND THE ELECTORATE

The concern to increase efficiency in local government in Nigeria and Britain is related to the concern to raise councillor calibre. As we said at the beginning of this chapter, critics believe that the poor calibre of councillors was closely related to the 'defective' structure of local government and therefore to inefficiency which led to the electorates' apathy towards the business of local authorities. As Dearlove (1979,p.15) says, part of the case for reorganizing local government boundaries and

creating larger local authorities has been grounded in an appreciation that this could have the effect of increasing the likelihood that urban local authorities would have councils composed of businessmen and professionals. This view is shared by the Royal Commission on Local Government in Greater London which felt that

there does seem to be some relationship between the size and scope of the authority and the capacity of the councillors and officials attracted....a certain minimum size and scope of authority seems to be needed to attract councillors and officers of the right calibre (1960,p.63).

The Working Group on Local Authority Management Structures agreed "that streamlining the structure and management processes will result in more of these potential candidates (professionals and businessmen)being willing to play an active part in local government" (1972,p.30).

In Britain, anxiety about councillor calibre is nothing new. It is a product of the socio-economic and political changes that took place in the 19th and early 20th centuries, such as population explosion, mobility, the Labour Party, the industrial revolution, franchisement, etc. (see chapters 3 and 4). These changes led to a change in class composition of local councils by 'crowding out' manufacturers and landowners and bringing in professionals and small businessmen. Hennock notes that as early as the middle of the 19th century "the personnel of town councils repeatedly attracted critical comment. It seemed to many observers that there had been a change for the worst since 1835" (1973,p.312). Hennock goes on to point out that by the 1850s there was a "decline in the number of substantial men" - "a decline in the representation of the social and economic elite" - and a rise in the representation of retailers: " really small businessmen.....In terms of business ability and of local standing the council had reached a nadir by the second half of the 1880s" (1973,pp.179-96, 225-6). Lee details the experience of Cheshire where

county government by country gentlemen....was transformed between 1840 and 1880....by the introduction of businessmen and industrialists into the county magistracy.....The landed gentry were displaced from their monopoly of local politics by new social leaders.....who made their wealth out of the expansion of urban industry (1963,pp.4-5,79).

By the end of the Second World War, however, "the county society of social leaders was replaced by a community of public persons.....and the county council.....gradually became a body of elected representatives.....each of whom was dependent for his position not on his social standing but on his experience in public service" (Lee,1963,pp.212-13).

At the beginning of this century, Ostrogorski noted a "decline in the intellectual, and to some extent, moral standards of the personnel of the town councils" (1902,Vol.1,p.49), and Lowell had "no doubt that the average standing of the councillors had gone down" (1908,Vol.2,p.199). In Bath, businessmen formed almost half of the council in 1938 but by 1962 they made up barely one-fifth of the total council (Green,1968). And critics believe that the "traditional leadership....from the higher occupational status groups" is being challenged by the leaders of the non-traditional workers through the trade-union and Labour movements" (Stacey,1960,pp.36-7). In 1960, Dame Evelyn Sharp, Permanent Secretary to the Ministry of Housing and Local Government told the Annual Conference of the Association of Municipal Corporations:

I do not think that enough really able people are interested today in taking part in local government. I do not think that enough people from business, from industry, from agriculture and the professions are going into it....Most people engaged or interested in local government agree....that the calibre of local government is not equal all round to its responsibilities.

This belief was translated into official action when The Committee on the Management of Local Government was appointed to "consider in the light of modern conditions how local government might best continue to attract and retain people (both elected representatives and political officers) of the calibre necessary to ensure its maximum effectiveness", and much of the

evidence to the Royal Commissions on Local Government in England and Scotland considered "it is a view widely held that the standards of elected representatives is not as high as it might or should be", and that something should be done to improve matters (Royal Commission on Local Government in Scotland, 1969, Written Evidence 9, p.6 ).

The problem of poor calibre among the councillors and officers of local government was so real in Nigeria that one cannot over-emphasize it. Critics believe that representative local government started off with councillors and officers of low calibre. We should note, however, that before representative local government was introduced, ' local government' was in the hands of 'noble traditional councillors' who were plenipotentiaries of the Obas or Emirs (see chapter 2). Thus, like in Britain, socio-economic and political changes in Nigeria forced out the powerful aristocrats after the Second World War and brought in petit-bourgeoisie (see Table 4.1). These elected councillors were regarded as intellectually and morally delinquent. The majority of them did not have secondary education (see Tables 4.3 and 4.4). In his study of three councils in Western Nigeria, Oyediran (1973, pp.457-8) discovered that almost one quarter of the councillors had no formal education whatsoever, and nearly one half (48 per cent) attended primary school only. 10.7 per cent had more than primary education and only 5.3 per cent had university education. As Humes put it, "the calibre of the (councillors) has been generally low; too few qualified and motivated men were available for office and thus too many of the incumbents were illiterate, unemployed and corrupt" (1970, p.99). Wraith believes that most councillors were driven into local politics "solely for what they could extort through bribery and corruption, and of the rest, few really understood their role, but interfered with their officials and dabbled in administration" (1972, p.76).

Critics found the quality and performance of councillors and officers deeply disappointing:

Generally speaking, men who stand for local councils are not successful or established men; many of them have no definable occupation, and regard their council membership as a way of supplementing, if not actually earning, a living. A high proportion are neither intelligent nor honest, and it is these who deter more reputable citizens from standing for local councils. Above all, local councils have virtually become appendages of the political parties and the first qualification for a councillor was to be a political 'activist'. The dishonesty of councils has come to be taken for granted, a fact which can be stated openly since it is the subject of so many official reports. No one seriously questions the fact that the chief purpose of many - indeed most - councillors was to enrich themselves by percentages on contracts, bribes for favours and corrupt practice in general; or that nepotism, the giving of jobs, market stalls or contracts to relatives was common practice (Wraith, 1972, pp.81-2).

The inefficiency and ineffectiveness of councillors and officers reinforced each other. There were no incentives for the officers. Until recently all local governments administered their own personnel services; the unified services in the West and Mid-West (Bendel State) covered less than 2 per cent of the top posts. The salaries were low, the security inadequate, the promotion prospects limited, and the respect and responsibility insufficient to attract and retain sufficiently qualified personnel. The regional/state governments did not do enough to improve the status of local government officers; and politicians undermined what little responsibility they tried to exercise. Patronage, nepotism and jobbery were therefore rampant (Smith and Owojaiye, 1981, p. 222.).

Furthermore, their inefficiency was exacerbated by the blurred distinction between the legislative function of the councillor and the executive function of the staff. The principal officers of a British local authority are men of high professional standing; as a broad generalization they are probably better educated, better qualified and better paid than many of the councillors whose servants they technically are. Councillors for their part are men and women busy with their own affairs,



to whom local government is voluntary public service, and who think too highly of the ability of their officials to dominate them. This contrasts with Nigeria where the principal officers of local authorities are few in number, their professional qualifications are very low, and they are not highly paid. And as we have seen, the councillors were not people of high attainments. The relationship between the councillors and the officers was one of master-servant relationship. The use of committees abetted the intensity of councillor interest in administrative matters such as staffing and contracts; as a result administrative matters were mistreated, professional staff were misused and abused, and the council was diverted from its more important policy and planning considerations. This is authenticated by the Public Service Review Commission (Udoji Commission): "Both the portfolio councillor and the multi-committee systems often lead to interference by council members in the purely day-to-day administrative issues of local government. This leads to continual frustration of officials, inefficiency and corruption" (1974,p.122).

A number of reasons can be advanced for the 'poor quality' of staff and councillors in Nigeria. First, local government was relatively young and did not command much loyalty; men who were completely honest in their dealings with family, clan and tribe were often corrupt as councillors. Second, only a limited number of educated people were available; the majority of the educated ones went into national politics or to professions and businesses. Third, and as a consequence of the second, the majority of people who engaged in rural local government were necessarily illiterates, and it was not easy for men of higher calibre to work alongside them. Fourth, the council areas were small in population and revenue, and the volume and importance of the business each was able to handle was such that men of standing were not interested in it. Fifth, as we have said, the councils were so deeply embroiled in politics that busy people with businesses or

professions of their own could not be bothered with them.

To summarize, one of the most severe shortcomings of local government was the lack of administrative and development planning caused by the paucity of top leadership posts. The most obvious deficiency was the lack of a post which would provide overall administrative leadership and plan for future development. There was no administrative post with clear-cut authority to direct and co-ordinate the department heads and with the salary and security to attract men with the education, experience and the expertise necessary to do the job competently and to secure the confidence of the politicians, the public and the state bureaucracy, and to stand firm against political interference in administrative matters. Nor were there enough professionally qualified men to head the local government departments on a full-time basis. A jurisdiction which could not afford such qualified personnel could not justify its independent existence. All these views were aggregated in the Guidelines: "the staffing arrangements to ensure a virile local government system had been inadequate. Excessive politicking had made even modest progress impossible. Consequently, there has been a divorce between the people and government institutions at their most basic levels" (1976, foreword).

#### Local Authorities and the Public

As quoted above, the Federal Government believed that there was 'a divorce between the people and government institutions', and the Royal Commission (1969, Vol.1, pp.28-9) concluded that the relationship between local authorities and the public was not satisfactory. The Committee on the Management of Local Government found that there was both ignorance of and indifference to local government on the part of the public.

A number of reasons were adduced for this apathy. First and most important, was the issue of councillor calibre. The electorate felt that

they were inefficient and ineffective, and in Nigeria's case, corrupt.

"Local government is, at present, apt to be irrelevant to people's problems, and often cannot solve them even though it has the responsibility for doing so" (Royal Commission on Local Government in England, 1969, Vol.1, p.28). Second, the apathy to local government was largely due to the defects in the existing structure which we have outlined. Third, the apathy of the electors was also said to be due to a trivial knowledge of local government or lack of interest in it. Surveys conducted for the Royal Commission (1966-69), like those of the Maud Committee (1964-67), revealed that only one out of four electors could spontaneously mention a single function provided by their council. "Between a quarter and a third thought that county boroughs provided hospitals and electricity, and almost one in five that the clerk of the council was elected" (Redcliffe-Maud and Wood, 1974, p.62). Many more had never met their councillor nor could name him (Hampton, 1970, pp.135-7). Fourth, the publicity needed to generate interest was also said to be inadequate since most of the councillors could not devote full-time to council work. Among the alleged deterrents to potential councillors used to be the amount of time which council work involved, more so that they were unpaid.

Before the 1972 Act, it was believed that people were dissatisfied with the traditional method of public participation in local government. It was suggested that too many decisions were initiated by the local authority or its agent before they were passed to the public. "There will have been consultations and discussions between departments of the local authority before the subject is put to a committee, but seldom will an attempt have been made to consult directly the people chiefly affected - parents and schoolchildren, for example, by a proposed reorganization of schools, or residents in an area proposed for redevelopment" (Redcliffe-Maud and Wood, 1974, pp.70-71). Furthermore, it was said that the councils

had inadequate devices for getting the necessary feedback of local views on the running of services. These views led the Royal Commission to conclude that "the system itself is hard enough for most people to understand" (1969, Vol.1, para.99), and the National and Local Government Officers Association confessed that the institution was "complex, obscure, pettifogging and dull" (Committee on the Management of Local Government, 1967, Vol.1, p.68).

Again, attempts were made prior to the 1974 and 1976 local government reforms in Britain and Nigeria respectively, to solve the problem of public apathy in local government affairs. Although the Maud and the Mallaby Committees were not directly concerned with the problem of public apathy, both reports, published in 1967, believed that public apathy was a by-product of the defects of local government such as the structural/functional deficiencies, an excess of central control, an excessive number of committees and sub-committees, too much fragmentation of work between separate departments, lack of calibre of some elected members and officers and other internal organizational matters. The Maud Committee's Report even concluded that the country was not getting full value in terms of human happiness for the time spent and for the increasing capital expenditure standing in 1967 at £3,000 million per annum (9 per cent of the gross national product).

The various reforms carried out in Nigeria between 1968 and 1971, and which attempted, in part, to solve the problem of public apathy in local government, were mere window-dressing. The reforms once again brought to the fore the chiefs and other traditional elements. Furthermore, local officers were replaced by Government civil servants which further increased centralization. Thus, patronization, powerlessness, poverty, corruption, parochialism, poorly conceived politics, pussillanimous policy-making institutions, patronage-ridden personnel services and a paucity of administrative and development planning due to a lack of professional administrative posts -

these and a host of other problems plagued local government institutions in Nigeria and increased public apathy prior to the 1976 reform. And the malaise that underlined these problems was the unwillingness of the regional/state governments to make investment required to develop responsive and responsible local government.

#### CENTRAL-LOCAL GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

Central control or lack of democracy, is the last but by no means the least important defect diagnosed by critics and the reformers. The power exercised by central government departments over the affairs of local authorities is extensive. It is deemed necessary to ensure a high national standard of service which otherwise might vary greatly from one authority to another. Any restraint must to some extent limit local autonomy, but the degree of control and its many forms perturbed those who felt that local democratic participation in decisions which determine the conduct of local services was superseded by the remote dictates of a Government juggernaut. Whether the choice is as simple as that between local but democratic inefficiency and centralized competence, as is sometimes suggested, is highly debateable, but we have already seen how local authorities have lost functions to a number of governmental and ad hoc bodies (see chapter 4).

We will not go into detailed discussion of the various forms of control - legislative, judicial, financial, administrative, etc. - because they are not only outside the ambit of this sub-section but they are also well-known to any student of public administration (see, for example, Green 1959,p.156; Jackson,1970,pp.220-34; Robson,1966,p.67; Seeley,1978,pp.152-69; Smith and Stanyer,1976,pp.113-29; Jones,1980; Richards,1978,pp.160-67). We will be concentrating on the prevalence of the idea that central control

had increased and that this was bad for local government (see below).

Traditional administration is seen as revolving around particular services, and local authorities are often seen as geared to "the local administration of a policy laid down in broad lines by the central government" (MacColl, 1951, p.10; see also, Green, 1959, p.156; Robson, 1966, p.67). Both these factors are said to encourage a situation in which local authorities conceive of their role in very narrow terms as limited to the provision of separate services which are seen in isolation each from the other and from the problems and needs in the local community. A situation is described in which the "central government is the determination of policy and principle. Local government is the application of those principles to the peculiarities of local fact" (Clarke, 1969, p.1). Broadbent (1977, p.138) went further, considering that "the total picture does seem to support the idea of the local state as an agent of central government". Indeed, there is the view that local authorities are just engaged in "managing a bundle of separate independent services" because they have "traditionally been considered as local agencies responsible for a collection of essentially separate services defined by statute and drawn together within the same organization for administrative and political convenience. Their role in short, was prescribed and restricted" (Redcliffe-Maud, 1967, p.350; see also, Greenwood, Smith and Stewart, 1971, p.5). This lop-sided central-local relationship has been attributed to the central government's reliance, not only on its formal powers of intervention, but also on its ability to impose its will upon local authorities by means of informal persuasion, for the existence of extensive legal powers of control has had a 'cumulative' and 'psychological effect' where local authorities submit questions to the minister "over which he has no legal control" (Jennings, 1947, p.258; see also, Dearlove, 1973, pp.11-12).

Critics advanced two reasons to account for the increase and extent of central control particularly since the Second World War. First, there is the belief that local authorities depend too much on central finance and that he who pays the piper dictates the tune (Marshall, 1960,p.15; Robson,1966,p.149). Hepworth, rather more pointedly asserted that "the more finance is supplied by the central government from nationally raised taxes the less tends to be the discretion allowed to local government. Conversely, the greater the ability of local government to raise finance from its own sources then the less able the central government is to control local government" (1970,pp.14-15). Chester suggested that "it could be argued with strong support from the history of central-local relations that the giving of a grant enabled the central Government to 'purchase' many of the administrative powers it now possesses" (1951,p.48). These critics believed that the only panacea to this defect is reform which would enable local authorities to gain more financial independence and with this a supposed increase in decisional autonomy (Chester,1951,p.333; Committee on the Management of Local Government, 1967, Vol.1,p.XI; Royal Commission on Local Government in England,1969,Vol.1,p.31).

Second, central control is believed to have increased because of "the prevailing desire for uniformity of public services" (Marshall,1960,p.15), and the Royal Commission (1969,Vol.1,p.30) declared that the public demand for equality was also responsible for detailed control. All these critiques were substantiated by the Royal Commission which agreed that "local authorities are not given enough freedom to go their own way. In addition they are subject to a number of minor controls and requirements which detract from their ability to manage their own affairs and make their own decisions" (1969, Vol.1,p.30).

In Nigeria, critics expressed similar dismay about central-local relations. Before the first military coup of 1966 local governments (or

native authorities) were closely controlled by the regions. All proposed by-laws had to be submitted for ministerial approval and the regional governments could compel an authority to make rules on any subject provided for in the local government laws. Rules or orders made by local authorities could be centrally revoked. Administrative controls were exercised through policy circulars, directives, regulations, instructions, routine consultations, and reporting. District officers attended council and committee meetings. Representatives of other central departments in the localities were involved in close supervision and inspection of local government activities, ensuring conformity to regional government policy. Some council departments consisted largely of field officers of central ministries, making the local authority an extension of the ministry's field service. For example, the forestry division of the Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources in the old Western Region acted as the forestry department of a number of local authorities (Mittlebeeler, 1971). Control of staffing arrangements was centralised and all financial decisions, including tax rates, level of surpluses and administrative expenditure, required central approval. Capital expenditure, embodied in development plans, required central approval, even down to the selection of projects for execution. If an authority was considered sufficiently viable financially to service a loan for large projects the centre controlled its source, type and conditions. Loans had to be managed and accounted for in accordance with ministerial directives. All local authority investments were subject to central clearance and the regional governments laid down procedures, conditions and regulations regarding the circumstances under which local authorities could lend money, including advances to staff.

As would be expected, central control was not relaxed under the military regime, least of all during the civil war. From his survey Mittlebeeler concluded that "In few countries with local government is



there greater centralization. Much of this phenomenon of course can be traced to the critical period through which the country is passing, but even in the days when collegiate legislative bodies were functioning, central control was very much in evidence" (1971,p.206). Adediji and Rowland concluded that the existence of budgetary controls "eloquently articulate the weak and dependent status of local authorities" (1972,p.227).

Extensive central controls over the internal administrative organization of local authorities were in existence. Before 1976, the appointment of senior officials, such as clerk to the council, treasurer and supervisor of works, required central approval. Conditions of service for local government service were regulated and salaries were determined by technical departments at the centre. The management of local authority staff was carried out in accordance with a common set of staff regulations for local authorities in each region. Financial procedures were closely controlled by the memoranda issued by the central ministry (Campbell, 1963). By 1972 it was estimated that "financial controls over local authorities in many states are now very detailed and, to an extent, go beyond controls exercised by central governments in most countries" (Adediji and Rowland, 1972,p.221).

Staffing arrangements were also controlled by the Government. In the west a Local Government Service Board, appointed by the regional executive, was set up in 1957 to make appointments and promotions in the unified local government service for senior positions. This meant, according to one observer, "the total elimination of local community control over the staff that serve them" (Oyediran,1974a,p.550; see also, Odenigwe,1973,P.109). Thus, though the local community paid the salaries, they had no power over recruitment or scale of remuneration. The L.G.S.B. was answerable to the central ministry not to local councils. Other officers also felt a

a sense of commitment to the state government rather than their local council (Kolawole,1979,p.10; Adewumi,1973,p.52).

Apart from the two aforementioned reasons for increased central control which were (and still are) applicable to both countries, there are other reasons which were peculiar to Nigeria. The motives for central control varied from one part of the country to another. They were influenced by the experiences which different regions had of local government in the past. In the north the institutions of local government, based as they were on the powerful traditional governments of the Hausa/Fulani emirates, were often seen as rivals to the centre. They were capable of acting in defiance of the old regional government (Yahaya,1975,p.24). They sometimes commanded greater loyalty from the masses. When the region was subdivided into states in 1967, leaving some emirates in an even more powerful position within the smaller territories covered by the new states, it was inevitable that local government had to be changed to underline its subordinate position. Elsewhere in Nigeria, the centre's preoccupation had been with corruption at the local level and partisan advantage in regional politics (Smith and Owajaiye,1981, p.221-2.). Intervention by the centre had been extensive on both counts. The modifications to the structure of the system introduced in the late sixties did not lessen local government's financial problems. Misappropriation of funds continued to provide the centre with opportunities to intervene in local management. The loss of qualified staff to other occupations persisted, further increasing local government's dependence on the centre in the planning and execution of local projects and services.

As we said earlier on, critics in both countries believed the excessive central control was bad because it undermined local democracy. It was also widely believed that central control reduced the efficiency of local government since men of calibre were unwilling to serve in an institution which they regarded as no more than the Government's agents.

This belief, it is alleged, also increased public apathy in local government affairs.

Whether these critics were correct in their diagnosis of local government defects or whether the alleged defects have been removed by the 1974 and 1976 reforms in Britain and Nigeria respectively will be analysed in chapter 8. First of all, let us examine the objectives and strategies of the reforms which were initiated as a result of these criticisms.

## CHAPTER SIX

REFORM OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

## INTRODUCTION

No suggestion for 'reform is more common than 'what we need is more coordination' (Pressman and Wildavsky,1973,p.133).

To ensure proper understanding of this chapter, we need to remind ourselves that reform is characterized by a value orientation that is different than merely recognizing the possibility that a new process or concept can be applied to a particular situation (innovation). In the administrative context the advocacy role is more important than the originating role. What we need stress here is the "effort to apply new ideas and combinations of ideas to an administrative system with a conscious view to improving the system for positive goals of national development " (Lee,1970,p.78). Hence, once local government defects have been diagnosed, analysed and understood, the logical step that follows is to decide what needs to be done (objectives) and how that can be accomplished (strategies). This stage is what Dror (1976,p.126) refers to as 'mega-policies' which lay down the framework of guidelines and the boundaries of policy space within which operational and detailed policies are to be established and decisions are to be made. Though it is easy to complain, it is difficult to diagnose and to suggest remedies, steps that present intellectual challenge and require relevant knowledge and creative thought. Symptoms may be misinterpreted; facts may be taken in the wrong sequence; only part of the whole may be seen (Caiden,1970,p.136).

Administrative reforms cannot be understood nor evaluated apart from the objectives that they endeavour to achieve. It is therefore of prime importance for any administrative reform that its objectives be properly set. Firstly, it is essential in order that the strategies

and instruments may be determined. Secondly, it discourages 'actors and sub-systems' from pursuing their own objectives under the pretext that these accord with those of the leaders or reformers. Thirdly, lack of concise objectives is dysfunctional to the operations of the organization in that it creates insecurity. Lastly, the degree to which the objectives are realised is a significant yardstick of the success or failure of the reform. Similarly, reorganizations are intended to accomplish purposes of one kind or another in addition to and beyond the modification of organizational structure, as exemplified in the local government reform in Britain and Nigeria where democracy and efficiency loomed large among the goals. This is another way of saying that reorganization is an intermediate objective toward something else. It is normally a means, not an end unto itself. (Though change 'for its own sake' sometimes contributes to the motivation for reorganization. Scale enlargement in southern Nigeria and Britain, and scale reduction in northern Nigeria were means towards the achievement of greater efficiency and effectiveness. Furthermore, it should be noted that the means-ends relationship is by no means a one-way avenue or indeed an avenue at all. Ends modify means, and means modify ends. As we will see later, ends were changed in certain cases during the implementing of reorganization).

In chapter 1 we said that goals can be divided into external and internal categories: (a) intra-administration directed objectives which are primarily concerned with improving the administration, such as efficiency, and (b) goals dealing with the societal roles of the administrative system, and with changing policies and programmes, such as development. This distinction is only for academic purposes because the two are closely inter-related. Internal objectives are usually set as means towards the greater attainment of external

objectives, for instance, to realise certain societal situations or relationships, or to increase and improve outputs. External objectives have been spelled out in many reform programmes, particularly in developing countries (Mosher, 1967 pp.497-8). In Nigeria, for example, social and economic development featured frequently as one of the prime objectives of local government reform. Another objective in Nigeria and Britain was the strengthening of democracy in local government and administration. Yet another reform goal which featured prominently in the reform of local government in Nigeria was the need for national integration and unity.

Internal goals may also be manifold. Traditionally, administrative reform has been equated with organizational efficiency, and often inspired by the necessity to reduce government expenditure. Some reforms, inspired by this objective, have nevertheless focused more generally on improvement of the administration. The 1974 reform in Britain emphasized efficiency, which was also an important consideration in the 1976 local government reform in Nigeria. However, efficiency often covers a wider area as exemplified by Mosher (1967, p.498) who emphasized effectiveness as a goal of reorganization.

Another major concept behind the reform of local government in Nigeria and Britain, but especially in the latter, is rationality, which in many respects is related to efficiency and effectiveness. For example, the introduction of new budget and planning methods (e.g. PPBS or PAR) is intended to increase rationality in budgetary allocations and in policy making. We will later relate each of these objectives to the local government reform in Britain and Nigeria.

Leemans mentions changes in influence and power relations as an important motivation for administrative reform. "Such changes may concern the relationship between the bureaucracy and the political organs.

The area of influence relations (sic) also includes trends to broaden participation in internal decision-making processes" (Leemans, 1976,p.29). Dror (1976,pp.129-130) goes a step further and catalogues reform objectives a number of which are applicable to the local government reforms in Britain and Nigeria (see chapter 1).

The Royal Commission under Lord Redcliffe-Maud was established in 1966 " to consider the structure of local government in England, outside Greater London, in relation to its existing functions; and to make recommendations for authorities and boundaries, and for functions and their divisions, having regard to the size and character of the areas in which these can be most effectively exercised and the need to sustain a viable system of democracy" (Royal Commission on Local Government in England,1969,Vol.1,p.iii). The Federal Military Government was a bit more explicit in setting out the objectives of the 1976 local government reform in the Guidelines and which were subsequently enacted in state edicts. These were:

- (a) To make appropriate services and development activities responsive to local wishes and initiatives by devolving or delegating them to local representative bodies;
- (b) to facilitate the exercise of democratic self-government close to the local levels of our society and to encourage initiative and leadership potential;
- (c) to mobilise human and material resources through the involvement of members of the public in their local development; and
- (d) to provide a two-way channel of communication between local communities and government (both State and Federal) (Guidelines for Local Government Reform,1976, p.1).

Thus both countries realise that administrative reform as a permanent and systematic effort should elicit an organic-adaptive response

from the public sector in every area and at every level of its work.

Therefore its purposes, more specifically, include:

- (a) increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of administrative units through improvement of their structures and working systems so as to ensure that available resources for fulfilling government functions are used to the greatest possible advantages;
- (b) assigning responsibilities, as precisely as possible, to the institutions and officials in charge of the co-ordination and execution of goal action;
- (c) simplifying, accelerating and decentralising the operative mechanisms of such entities, while expediting and simplifying procedures;
- (d) making every effort to ensure that governmental personnel have the necessary ability and training to adequately perform their tasks by means of training and motivation programmes designed to stimulate conscientious, innovative, dynamic and responsible attitudes towards their work; and
- (e) stressing the importance of co-ordination, collaboration, and teamwork as a government policy for ending insularity and lack of co-ordination.

Since administrative reform is not mechanical, but based on human values, it therefore calls for genuine decisions, support, readiness for participation and innovation, goodwill of the public and proper allocation of resources. And to be successful, the reform must make clear the direct benefits for the participants of the reform and the masses in general.

Administrative reform objectives, therefore, are oriented towards fulfilling specific demands of the public rather than towards mere "efficiency" or an abstract 'rationalization' of the government machinery. In the case of the 1976 reform in Nigeria it was hoped to make local government a third tier of government activity in the nation,



which will govern effectively and democratically at the local level.

It was hoped that a reformed local government system would allow:

- (a) the Head of State to achieve the most effective possible realization of his goals and programmes, especially those concerned with socio-economic and political development: "The reform of our system of Local Government is not only important and desirable in itself, but it is a crucial element in the Political Programme of the Federal Military Government. Indeed, having disposed of the question of the creation of new States, the Local Government Reforms are the next important exercise in the process of building a sound foundation for the return of this country's administration to civil rule " (Guidelines, 1976, foreword );
- (b) the Head of State to utilise his national programmes through an efficient, effective and democratic local government. He believed that for national economic development and political stability to be achieved, he must wake the people out of their lethargy and inertia, beginning from the grassroot - the local government. Thus he sought to promote local government human, material and financial resources through the added impulse which his programmes would give to co-ordination, participation and teamwork (Guidelines, 1976, foreword); and
- (c) the citizens and society in general to enjoy constant improvement in the economic, social, political and cultural aspects of their daily lives, efficient attention in their dealings with the government and capability in the services they have the right to demand of government entities. "These reforms would mean nothing if they did not include the certainty that as from now, every stratum of Nigerian society would benefit from the continued prosperity of this country, through the availability of amenities, indeed necessities, such as electricity, adequate water supply, improved transportation, health facilities and

so on" (Guidelines,1976, foreword).

To emphasize the commitment of the Murtala/Obasanjo regime to a virile democratic local government, the responsibilities to be performed by the new local governments, both concurrent and exclusively, were carefully spelt out (see Appendix 1).

In a nutshell, the goals of the 1974 local government reform in Britain and those of the 1976 reform in Nigeria will be crystallized into three main objectives: FUNCTIONS AND SIZE, DEMOCRACY, AND RATIONALITY OR EFFICIENCY. In Nigeria, however, the objectives included national stability and socio-economic development.

#### FUNCTIONS AND SIZE

It would have been absurd to reform the structure of local government without relating it to functions and vice-versa. Thus the term of reference required the Royal Commission to consider the structure of local government in England, outside Greater London, in relation to its existing functions; and the Nigerian Government sought to achieve active participation of the people in local government by devolving vital functions to the councils (Guidelines,1976,p.1). The concept of rationality is also closely linked with functions for there would be no need to talk of efficiency or effectiveness if there are no functions to be performed. And the simple fact that local authorities have functions means that they have to perform them well. These functions are varied and are of immense scope, including responsibility for the police, for the fire services, for almost all education other than university, for the health and welfare of mothers and infants, the old and the sick, for children in need of care, for public health, for the physical environment and the use of land, for housing, for sports and recreation, for museums, art galleries and libraries, for highways, traffic

and transport. The Commission sums up the functions of local government as "responsibility for the safety, health and well-being, both material and cultural, of people in different localities..." (Royal Commission on Local Government in England, 1969, Vol. 1, p. 10).

The Federal Government felt that a reformed local government would generate "local initiative and response to local needs" (Guidelines, 1976, p. 1). To achieve this aim, the Government devolved functions

- (a) which require detailed local knowledge for efficient performance;
- (b) in which success depends on community responsiveness and participation; and
- (c) which are of a personal nature requiring provision close to where the individuals affected live, and in which significant use of discretion or understanding of individuals is needed (Guidelines, 1976, p. 1.).

The above definitions of the role of local government stress its primary responsibility for all aspects of community welfare within the geographical area of its jurisdiction.

In chapters 4 and 5 we catalogued critics' displeasure with the loss of functions by local government either to the central government or to ad hoc bodies of the central government. These criticisms which also border on the central - local relations, especially the need for local democracy, became a gospel word for writers, the Redcliffe-Maud Commission and the Federal Government of Nigeria. The Royal Commission (1966-69) and the Federal Government therefore aimed at righting wrongs by stemming the erosion of local government functions hoping thereby to strengthen their democratic base. The Nigerian Government said that devolving adequate functions to local government would ensure active and democratic participation of the people (Guidelines, 1976, p. 1), and the Conservative government argued in 1971 that

a vigorous local democracy means that authorities must be given real functions - with powers of decision and the ability to take action without being subjected to excessive regulation by central government through financial or other controls...above all else a genuine local democracy implies that decisions should be taken - and should be seen to be taken - as locally as possible (Local Government in England: Government Proposals for Reorganization, 1971, p.1).

We must note in passing, however, that most of the critics of local government functional losses have not taken time to take stock of local government gains especially in Britain (see chapter 8).

Both the Royal Commission and the Federal Government believed that structural reorganization was a prelude to functional effectiveness. They noted that some services were being provided jointly by two or more authorities. There were duplications, overlapping, wastage and confusion. Redcliffe-Maud and Wood observed that residents of Stalybridge had area offices in Dunkinfield for education, in Stalybridge for health, in Wilmslow for children, and in Stockport for planning, while for welfare there was no administration at area level (1974, p.30). As we saw in chapters 4 and 5, the situation in Nigeria was not better than the one described above.

To offset these structural defects and the consequent functional inefficiency, the Nigerian Government proposed that a population of 150,000 (The Royal Commission proposed 250,000) was the minimum necessary for effective discharge of local functions; because only an authority of this size would "have at its disposal the range and calibre of staff, and the technical and financial resources necessary for effective provision of education, housing and the personal services" (Royal Commission on Local Government in England, 1969, Vol.1, para.257). Furthermore, the Federal Government's Guidelines say that "in order to achieve sufficiently large scales of operations to be able to perform all the types of functions reasonably economically, whilst remaining sufficiently local, local governments should, as far as possible, serve total populations of between

150,000 and 800,000" (1976,p.3.).

Another solution, and which is closely linked to the idea of population, is that authorities should be large enough to be responsible for, say, land-use planning and transportation, and at the same time act as housing authorities. Just as there are different views about structure, so there are about the right size of authority. The fact is, again, that there is no one size which is uniquely right, while all others are wrong. The Royal Commission, like the Federal Government, therefore proposed a population size which would solve the country-town dichotomy, thus creating a local government in its simplest, most understandable and potentially most efficient form: an area embracing town and country and a population of at least some 250,000 (Nigeria: 150,000-800,000) (Guidelines,1976,p.4.). It was claimed that any authority smaller than these figures "cannot offer attractive career prospects for well-qualified staff and they have financial disadvantages" (Guidelines,1976,p.4.).

Thus, the Federal Government and the Royal Commission believed that the areas of the new authorities must be large enough for planning. Secondly, the proposed population range in each country would allow local government to attract the necessary skilled manpower and resources needed to provide services of the highest standard. Thirdly, wherever possible, each authority should be responsible for all the services in its area but at the same time it must not be so large as to be unresponsive to the wishes of the electors.

#### DEMOCRACY

There is a universal demand for further democratization and for opportunities for large-scale participation in political, or more generally, in public action. In a country like Nigeria, popular participation in economic and social development programmes is conceived essential for their

effectiveness. In countries like Britain and America, with long-established and well entrenched democratic systems, increasing awareness of the limitations of representative government as an instrument for large-scale participation in political action has caused a search for new forms by which to involve citizens, citizen groups and organizations in the making and implementation of policies (see chapter 9).

Of central importance in the debate about the structure of local government are the objectives 'democracy' and 'efficiency'. The overriding objective of the Royal Commission and the Federal Government was to make reforms which would enhance both the effectiveness of local government and 'sustain a viable system of local democracy'. The need for local democracy is also emphasized by Brain Smith because it is the base structure for "political education through participation. Local democracy, in theory, ensures the responsiveness of administration to the peculiar interests of local communities and protects the general health of democracy" (1976,p.31).

But as we indicated above, democracy goes beyond mere electioneering and the right to vote; it includes important concepts as accountability and control, responsiveness and the redress of grievance. According to Wood (1976,pp.22-5) democracy has at least four different meanings. There is the representational meaning, emphasizing election and voting rights. It is this meaning that led the Royal Commission to propose single-member wards with a maximum of 10,000 constituents, and as a consequence, the Commission suggested a population of 1,000,000 as the maximum for a local authority. For the same reason the Federal Government proposed an upper limit of 800,000 people for any local authority. Thus in Britain and Nigeria (especially northern Nigeria), the pre-reform structure was said to be 'undemocratic' because the authorities were too large and remote from the electorate, with the result that about half

the seats at local elections were regularly filled without a contest.

The geographical meaning of 'democracy' emphasizes the importance of 'smallness', both in terms of physical accessibility and population which lead to a genuine representation of local interests. The Commission demonstrated the importance it attaches to the geographical meaning of democracy by "running a 'Community Attitudes Survey' which sought information about the size of areas to which people felt most attached, and by mapping areas in terms of such factors as the journey to work, the circulation area of local newspapers, and bus routes" (Wood, 1976, p. 24.). Similarly, the Federal Government warned against 'large and sluggish bureaucracy' which is distant from the people. "If too large, even with small population, remoteness from some of the people arises" (Guidelines, 1976, p. 4.). Both the Federal Government and the Royal Commission believed that democratic control of services and accessibility call necessarily for a small functional unit. It is a basic requirement of effective local democracy that authorities should be in charge of areas within which they can provide efficient services. Furthermore, the reformers felt that the bigger the unit, the more doubtful it becomes whether the individual citizen can have a real sense of belonging to it (Royal Commission on Local Government in England, 1969, Vol. 1, p. 72).

The third definition of democracy emphasizes the concept of 'responsible' government. Birch (1962) sub-classifies this into two parts: 'Responsive' government is one which responds to public demands, and 'accountable' government is government seeking judgement on its performance. Both definitions imply the cargo-cult concept (that goods will be delivered), that it is responsible for the provision of reasonably important public services. Here there is a clear link between the ideas of 'democracy' and those of 'efficiency' or 'effectiveness'. A responsible local authority is one with clear choices to make about the

nature of its outputs: it is not one which is too small to be entrusted with a reasonable range of functions by the Government. Little wonder that the Royal Commission wanted local authorities which would "enable citizens and their elected representatives to have a sense of common purpose" (1969, Vol.1, p.3.), and the Federal Government wanted local government to be "responsive to local wishes and initiative...and... provide a two-way channel of communication between local communities and government" (Guidelines, 1976, p.1.). Wood concludes that "though the discussion about responsiveness and accountability frequently revolved around calls for 'participation', for local ombudsmen, for press and public access to meetings of council committees, beneath all this lies the clear implication that democracy and functional effectiveness are linked" (1976, pp.24-5).

Fourthly, the concept of 'democracy' could refer to functional division between different tiers of government. For instance, the Conservative White Paper of 1971 stated that "a genuine local democracy implies that decisions should be taken as locally as possible" (Local Government in England: Government Proposals for Reorganization, 1971, para.8). Like the definition above, this also links democracy to efficiency.

The above definitions do not underrate the importance of elections; in fact they buttress its significance since elections are effective ways of emphasizing accountability and control. Councillors have to face re-election, and this is bound to influence their decisions on major policies. Thus election is effective in persuading councillors to anticipate the likely local reaction to alternative decisions. This anticipated reaction from the electorate suggests that councillors are responsive to local pressure. "Whenever a controversial matter requires decision a council will test the local climate of opinion before taking action and will have in mind the consequences of taking an unpopular line"



(Redcliffe-Maud and Wood, 1974, p. 21.).

Before the 1974 reform, local complaints were handled by the councillors. With the exception of Bristol in the mid-1960s, there was no formal 'office of complaints'. The Royal Commission realised the difficult situation a councillor might face, say, when pressed by a local resident to pursue a complaint which is against a decision he has made. This and other reasons led the Commission to recommend the creation of local ombudsmen, which it was hoped, would buttress the four ideas of democracy as defined above.

#### EFFICIENCY

We have already said that 'efficiency' and 'effectiveness' are closely related to 'rationality', and we shall discuss them as one of the objectives of local government reform in Britain and Nigeria. In both countries the expectations affecting the scale of public services are outstripping the capacity of the economy to provide resources with which to satisfy them, at any rate without restrictions on private consumption and investment which currently would be regarded as intolerable. It is in this context that one must place the movement to raise the efficiency of local administrative institutions and methods. Thus, since the public services have extended, and yet the constraints on increasing the resources devoted to them have become more compelling, the major reaction has been to call for administrative reform with the hope of improving the performance of local administrative agencies - improving input-output ratios.

The search for efficiency in Nigeria and Britain is as old as the 'identification' of the defects of local government. It was not surprising, therefore, that the Federal Government and the Royal Commission

placed great emphasis on the need for effectiveness and efficiency. The barage of administrative reforms that took place in Britain in the 1960s was largely influenced by the Plowden Report. Three other reports - Mallaby, Maud and Bains - greatly stimulated this quest for efficiency. It is interesting to note, by way of contrast, that Nigeria did not have any committee or commission of inquiry on local government management prior to the 1976 reform. We shall, however, be drawing on recommendations of the Federal Government in its search for efficiency in local government. The different approaches in the quest for efficiency which we shall be considering are: Manpower Management, Co-ordination of Policy and Administration, and Management Techniques.

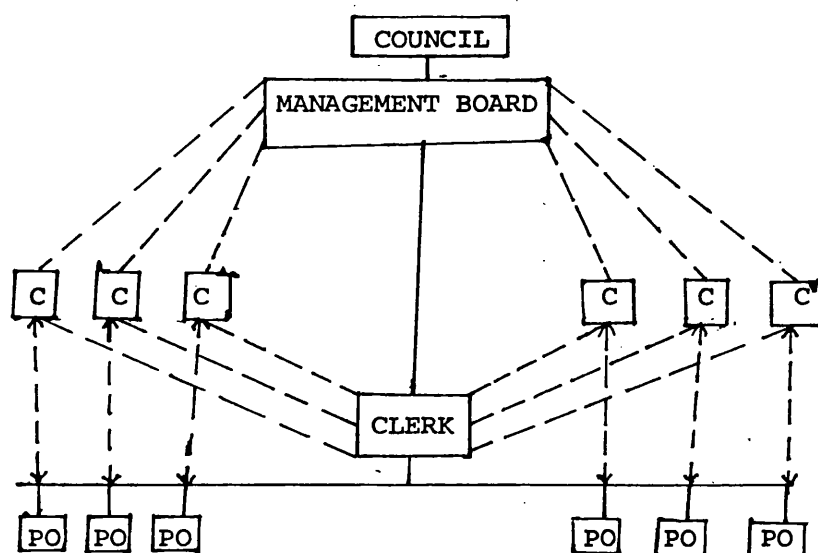
#### Manpower Management

The Royal Commission in its quest for efficiency leant heavily on the Mallaby and Maud Reports on personnel management. The best use of scarce manpower is a central part of efficient administration. Two main factors stand out. One is the argument, elucidated in the Mallaby Report, that skilled staff are in short supply and local authorities suffer harmful shortages. The other dominant factor is the view that new skills are rapidly being demanded as governmental services expand. To solve these problems, the Bains Report, like the Maud and Mallaby Reports, recommended that internal management needed change dependent on reform of the system through effective recruitment policy, beautiful career prospects, extensive training facilities, staff streamlining, use of specialist services and reduction in the number of local government committees and departments. Committees should relate to programme areas rather than the activities of different departments. More significantly, major instruments for corporate planning were necessary in every authority: a central policy and resources committee, a chief executive

without departmental responsibilities, a management team of chief officers which he would lead, and a system of interdepartmental working groups implementing tasks in a general system of corporate planning and implementation (see Diagram 6.1). The setting up of a personnel function was also recommended. In short, it was recommended that "the traditional departmental attitude within much of local government must give way to a wider-ranging corporate outlook" (Working Group on Local Authority Management Structures, 1972, p.6.).

In Nigeria, the Federal Government realised that one of the obstacles to past reform efforts was inadequate staffing. Or as the Guidelines put it, "the staffing arrangements to ensure a virile local government system had been inadequate" (1976, foreword). And in order to remedy this defect the Government recommended that the Ministry of Local Government should ensure "that the quality and quantity of staff available to local

DIAGRAM 6.1: THE PROPOSED ORGANIZATION



C = COMMITTEE

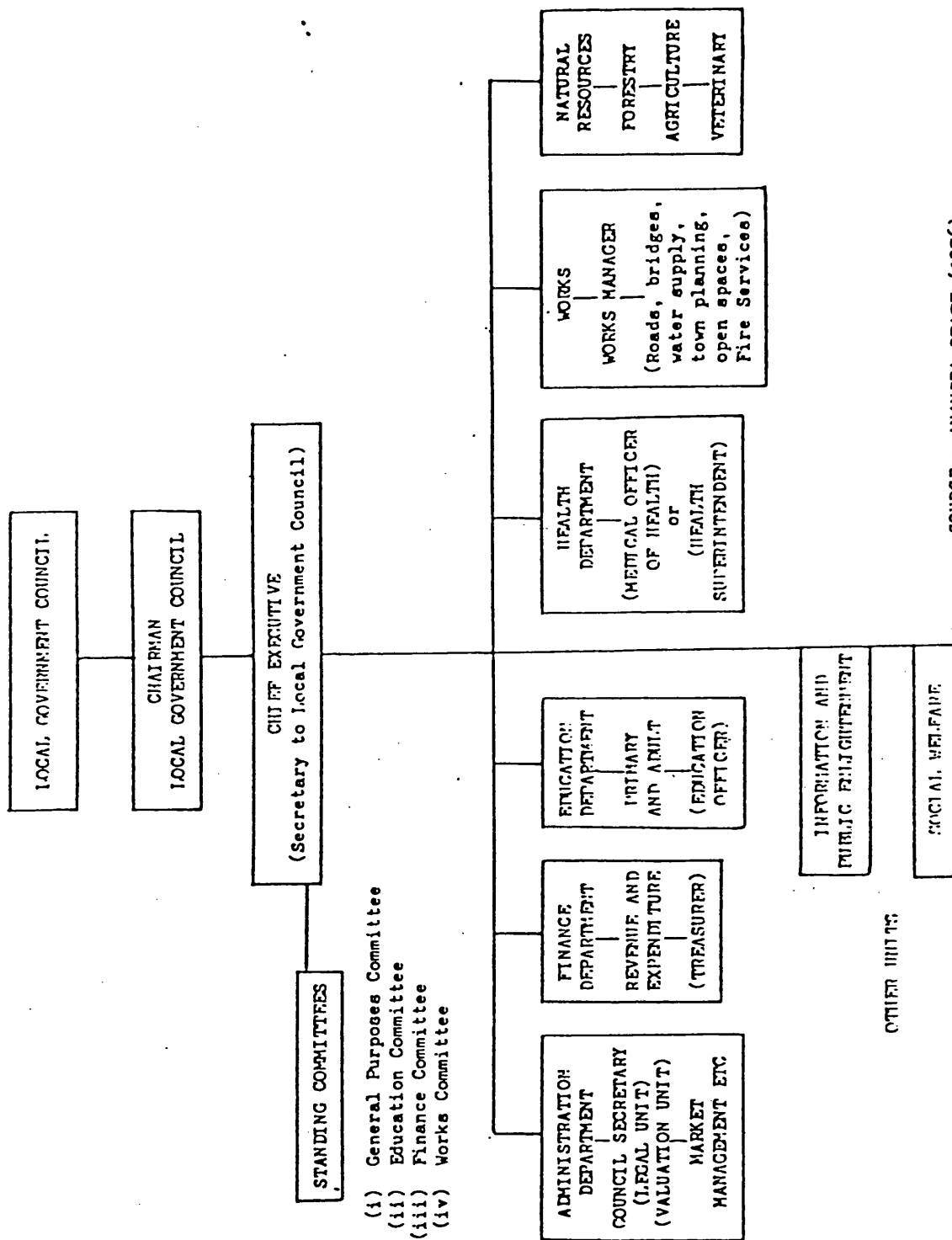
PO = PRINCIPAL OFFICER

— Indicates line of command running from the council through the Management Board and the Clerk to the Principal Officers.

---- lines of contact and advise only.

\* NOTE\* This diagram does not imply that one committee has only one

DIAGRAM 6.2: LOCAL GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION IN NIGERIA



SOURCE : ANAMBRA STATE (1976)

principal officer associated with it or that each principal officer has necessarily a single committee to refer to.

Source: Jackson, 1970,p.143.

governments is such that they are able to discharge the functions and provide the services for which they have been given responsibilities" (Guidelines, 1976,p.11.). Improved personnel is necessary in view of the huge number of functions and the large fund which local governments are expected to shoulder. The Ministry of Local Government is also to lay down the terms and conditions of service for local government staff so as to bring them to par with the State Civil Service, and promote local government training schemes at various levels for administrative, financial, professional and technical staff in co-operation with training institutions and other ministries (Guidelines,1976,pp.11-12.).

Each local government must have an Executive Secretary who will be responsible for the administrative management of the local government as a whole and should be the secretary to the local government council and to the council's Finance and General Purposes Committee (see Diagram 6.2 and Appendix 11). To make the post attractive to candidates, the secretary is placed on the same salary as a deputy permanent secretary.

The Guidelines recommend that each state, through its Local Government Service Board, should set up a combined local government service for the more highly trained cadres. And the Board

should be responsible for all employment, postings, discipline etc. of all members of the combined local government service, but should delegate internal postings within local governments and minor disciplinary matters to Establishment Committees of local governments subject to the right of appeal to the Local Government Service Board, which should also serve in an appellate capacity in respect of disciplinary matters concerning staff employed by local governments directly (Guidelines,1976,p.11).

Thus, it was felt in both countries that these internal changes required a restructuring of the system of local government. After all, "if

large areas are to be contemplated in order to provide for more efficient administration of some services than is at present possible within the local government field" (Hart,1965,p.7), then "the traditional departmental attitude within much of local government must give way to a wide-ranging corporate outlook" (Working Group on Local Authority Management Structures, 1972,p.6; see also, Royal Commission on Local Government in England,1969,Vol.1,pp.123-4; Stanyer,1970,pp.15-16).

#### Co-ordination of Policy and Administration

Another approach in the quest for efficiency centres on the twin problems of co-ordination and policy planning. Co-ordination has, traditionally, been carried out by the council itself, by horizontal senior committees such as finance, by the estimates and budgetary process, by party control, and by informal working groups of officers. But in recent years local authorities have felt the need to go further in their search for comprehensive administration, and have considered the advantages of a specific co-ordinating committee.

The Maud Report (1967) and the Federal Government's Guidelines criticized local government arrangements whereby members concerned themselves with details of day-to-day administration, much of which could be entrusted to officers. The Maud Report, drawing from the experiences of foreign countries and of local experiments at Newcastle and elsewhere, stressed firmly that the Clerk should be the undisputed head of the council's staff. The Guidelines similarly emphasized that the secretary should be the head of all appointed personnel. The Maud Committee and the Federal Government produced detailed plans to ensure co-ordination of both administration and policy in local authorities, which involved a drastic reappraisal of the nature of committee work and the structure of local administration. The structure and functions of the Local

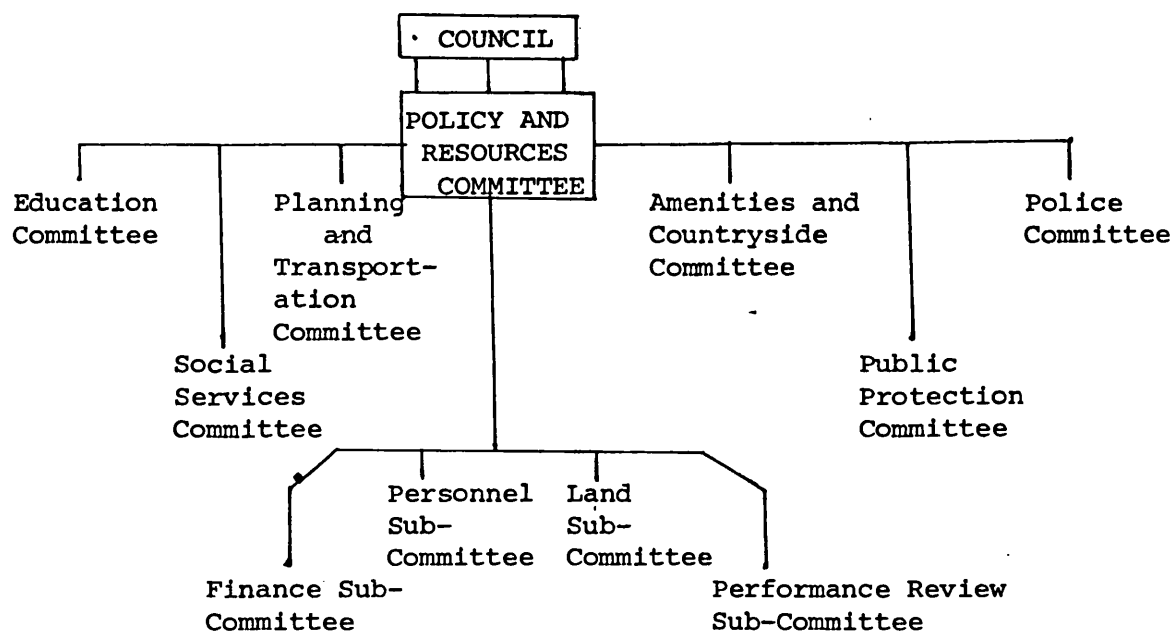
Government Service Board recommended by the Federal Government were similar to Maud's Management Board which was rejected by local authorities. The onus to recruit, promote, transfer and train local government staff rest with the Board.

The significance of the Management Board for the existing committee organization would be:

- (a) Committees should not be directing or controlling bodies nor should they be concerned with routine administration;
  - (b) no committee should have more than fifteen members (including co-opted members);
  - (c) committees should be deliberative and representative bodies;
  - (d) committees should take executive decisions only in exceptional circumstances when the management board requires them to do this - these fields of decision-taking should be strictly defined by the management board and it should be made clear that the committees issue instructions to the officers only on these matters; and
  - (e) the number of committees should be drastically reduced and similar or related services should be grouped and allocated to one committee
- (Committee on the Management of Local Government (Maud Report), 1967, Vol.1). Paragraph 168 states: " we believe that in an all-purpose authority it should be possible to reduce their number to about six", and suggests - Planning and development, Housing, Works - including highways and traffic, Education and culture, Health and welfare, and Public protection. Diagram 6.3 illustrates Bains alternative model for the committee structure of a non-metropolitan county.

In order to enhance local government efficiency, the Guidelines (1976,p.9) recommended that local authorities should avoid numerous or large committees. The Government recommended that there should, in all cases, be two main Standing Committees: Finance and General Purposes,

**DIAGRAM 6.3: COMMITTEE STRUCTURE - NON-METROPOLITAN COUNTY**  
**(BAINS COMMITTEE PROPOSALS)**



and Education. Other standing committees should be kept to a minimum and should be restricted to manageable size (usually four). The Guidelines require that members of all committees (except ex-officio members) including their chairmen should be elected by the council. So also every local authority is expected to have a chairman and not more than four supervisory councillors who will devote most of their time and energies to the affairs of local government. The Guidelines also recommended that councils should exercise 'political control' over the departments of their local government through supervisory councillors or through small committees (1976,p.9). Like the Maud Report, the Guidelines recommended that the roles of the committees would be to make recommendations to the management board (Service Board) on 'major objectives' and 'major strategies' for achieving those goals. They would review progress in the sphere of the particular service that concerned them, consider reactions of the public and deal with any matters referred to them by the



board. Executive decisions would only be made in exceptional cases and when the board asked for this to be done; the implication being that delegated authority would normally rest with officers rather than committees. As the Guidelines put it, "members of departmental committees will not give directives to executive heads of departments directly, but if it concerns policy matters, such directives should come from the committee chairman as political heads of departments. The functions of committee chairmen thus envisaged are a departure from those of the familiar portfolio councillor with executive functions" (1976,p.9). We should note, however, that all the recommendations contained in the Guidelines were more or less mandatory. There is little room for flexibility and criticism under a military regime. In Britain, on the other hand, a number of people attacked the Maud report, especially the idea of a management board (Greenwood, Norton, and Stewart,1969,pp.151-68; Smith and Stanyer,1968,pp.239-279).

Thus, generally it would appear that local authorities accept the Maud Report's diagnosis of the organizational problems which result from their committee structure, and also accept that greater internal co-ordination is required and could be achieved by allocating wide functions to a policy committee; but it is not accepted that reorganization should entail a radical change in the powers or functions of existing committees. The barrage of criticisms levied on the management board proposal paved the way for the Bains Report. The Report of the Royal Commission left out the idea of a management board but its members were "firmly of the opinion that the new main authorities must have a central committee, board or body of some kind, by whatever name it may be called" (1969,Vol.1, para.486). Additionally, "the case is surely cast-iron for a central body to advise the council on its strategy and priorities, co-ordinate the policies and work of the service committees, and ensure that the best

managerial methods are adopted in each department and in the work of the council as a whole" (1969, Vol.1, para.489). Each of the new authorities would therefore work out the form of central committee most suited to its requirements, and also the division of duties between the central committee and the service committees"which would continue to be at the heart of affairs...It is, however, a radical change from traditional practice that we seek. The central committee must be at the core of the administration; and the proliferation of committees must be ended" (1969, Vol.1, paras.493-5).

#### Management Techniques

We must point out at the beginning that all that we are going to discuss in this sub-section did not feature in the 1976 reform in Nigeria. "An approach to local government which centred on such grand concerns as democracy, efficiency and central control, hardly had time to notice matters so mundane as the actual working of particular local authorities. Local government was either pure administration, or a self-regulating democracy, and from these perspectives the management of local government could easily be assumed away as an irrelevant, taken-for-granted blur" (Dearlove, 1979, p.113).

In Britain, corporate management-Management Services, employment of private consultants, LAMSAC, PPBS, Work Study, O & M, Operational research, Network Analysis, use of computers, and Cost-benefit Analysis - has been an important ingredient of recent local government reports, such as the Maud and the Bains reports, and has aroused great interest among members and officers alike. It aims to provide a framework whereby the needs of a community are viewed comprehensively and the activities of the local authority are planned and executed in a unified way to satisfy those needs

to the fullest extent possible within available resources. To achieve these aims necessitated considerable restructuring of the internal organization of local authorities in 1974.

#### NATIONAL STABILITY AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Two 'external objectives' featured largely in the 1976 reform in Nigeria: national unity and stability and socio-economic development, both of which cannot really be emphasized in the case of the 1974 reform in Britain.

##### National Unity and Stability

In the first place, this was expressed in the government's concern with the political unity of Nigeria. The Federal Government wanted a system of local government which would stimulate the consolidation and reinforcement of national unity and the reduction of any centrifugal forces that might be present.

The reform of our system of local government is not only important and desirable in itself, but it is a crucial element in the political programme of the Federal Military Government (emphasis mine). Having disposed of the question of the creation of new states, the Local Government Reforms are the next important exercise in the process of building a sound foundation for the return of this country's administration to civil rule (Guidelines, 1976, foreword).

The Government was not only reluctant and unwilling to establish a local government system that might create power centres capable of competing with or effectively opposing the central government; it was determined to demarcate the boundaries of local units in such a way that existing power centres will be weakened or destroyed. Just as the establishment of regional bodies in Czechoslovakia during the 1950s was undoubtedly partly inspired by the Government's wish to combat federalist inclinations and to reinforce its grip on the whole country, so the

creation of states in 1967 and the reorganization of local government in 1976 were structural efforts made to combat the disintegrating influence exercised by the former regions and provinces of Nigeria. As the Guidelines put it, the implications of the reform "in fact mean that a fundamental change in the political structure of this country will be brought about" (1976, foreward).

Thus the government destroyed the existing regional governmental and administrative structures. This was necessary because Nigeria is a country of many peoples, each with their governmental structures developing into power centres which affected the authority of the central government and consequently endangered national unity.

Finally, the Federal Government introduced representative local government as a nation-building instrument. Meeting the people's desires to participate in governmental affairs, at least at the local level, was considered a useful device by which to reduce their resistance. It is interesting and ironical that it was the military, an undemocratic institution, that reorganized representative local government in Nigeria.

National unity was also interpreted as the nation-wide acceptance and implementation of central government policies, the integration of local policies in the national policy and adherence by local governments to the standards of services laid down in the centre. This problem is closely related to the more fundamental question of whether the function of local authorities is solely or primarily to foster local interests or to serve national interests at the local level. The objective of national unity, understood in this fashion, not only requires a certain structure of local government and a certain relationship between local and state government, but also necessitates the shaping of local government units whose size and managerial capacities can guarantee the level of achievement

and service demanded by the centre. The Federal Government therefore recommended that local councils should have substantial control over local affairs, initiate and direct the provision of services, and "determine and implement projects so as to complement the activities of the State and Federal Governments..." (Guidelines, 1976,p.1). Furthermore, the Government was aware of the values, strength and common interests inherent in the existing system by demanding that local government should, with such adjustments as may be appropriate, be coterminous with the existing Divisions. (Guidelines, 1976,p.5.).

#### Socio-Economic Development

This objective coincides in certain respects with that of efficiency which, in the fulfilment of public tasks, is considered to contribute to the economic and social development of an area. In Nigeria, the efficient performance of public tasks at the local level is a prerequisite for successful realization of the national plan. In spite of the fact that development and efficiency are interdependent there are sufficient reasons why separate attention should be paid to the objective of social and economic development. Firstly, it needs more than just efficiency; it also requires the promotion of active popular participation as well as the integration of governmental activities for the various geographical areas and governmental tasks. Secondly, social and economic development is the primary objective of overall Nigerian government policy to such a degree that, if only for this reason, it deserves special mention. This concerted government policy for economic and social development is not confined to Nigeria alone, but to an increasing extent, in Britain, although as we pointed out in chapter 3, the role of local government in development is to provide the basic opportunities such as land for factories, rather

than plunge into actual development.

Furthermore, the stress on local government as an instrument for development is closely associated with the reflection, wrongly or rightly, that small units will stimulate popular participation in developmental activities. This reflection is deeply rooted in the 1976 reform objectives which were inter alia, to develop local leadership, to develop pride and unity in their areas and country, to bridge the gap between people and the administration, to bring the people's thought to bear on their problems, to initiate them in the art of self-help . . . . . and collective action, and above all, to release their latent creative energies and to utilize the vast manpower potential in the country for its development. Some of these motives were also mentioned by the Royal Commission (1966-69); in Britain, the cry for metropolitan government, encompassing a number of existing local units, springs from concern regarding the inability of the existing structure to provide the leadership, stimulus and integration necessary for economic expansion; moreover, central cities were often hampered in their economic growth by lack of territory, thus the call for the eradication of town - country dichotomy, which would enable municipalities to meet industrial and commercial expansion needs. Lastly, the tendency to construct large local authorities was also inspired by the wish to provide a governmental instrument and basis for economic development. In its evidence to the Royal Commission, the Ministry of Housing and Local Government advocated the city region concept not only because it "considered that the city region as the...development unit (would be)able to formulate and execute its own policies", but also because it would be a prerequisite of effective future investment and economic development (Royal Commission on Local Government in England, 1969, Vol.1, paras.112,115 and 120). The

Commission itself was convinced that large units of local authority, such as provincial councils, "are required which can settle the broad economic, land use and investment framework for the planning and development policies of operational authorities" (1969, Vol.1, para 283). Little wonder that the Government pointed out in 1977 that "local authorities now need...to stimulate investment by the private sector, by firms and by individuals, in industry, in commerce and in housing" (Policy for the Inner Cities, 1977, p.9).

An important issue, therefore, for the Nigerian government especially, was the type of local government structure and administration which would provide the most effective instrument for popular participation in developmental activities. As we said before, the recommended population range indicates the strong emphasis which was placed on participation in socio-economic development as an objective of the reform policy.

The type of participation envisaged is primarily concerned with the execution of decisions taken by local political and administrative authorities. It refers, therefore, to mass participation in developmental works such as improvement of agriculture, building of roads and houses, provision of health facilities etc. rather than to the participation of a few people in policy and decision making. It is obvious, however, that the two types of participation cannot be fully separated; engaging people in developmental activities implies, in many cases, that they are also allocated a role in the taking of minor decisions.

As we shall try to prove in chapter 9, large-scale participation is closely related to community development, which stresses that people should actively and willingly partake in the execution of projects which have been decided upon by the people themselves, or the local council, or in exceptional cases, by the State Government field agencies. The relationship between local government and community development is frequently pointed

out; it is often claimed that the former should contribute considerably towards the latter, but in order to do so, the Federal Government believed that local government must have proper structure, powers and methods of operation (see sub-sections 'Functions and Size', and 'Efficiency'). Awareness of the significance of local government in stimulating citizen participation in social and economic development was therefore central to the 1976 reform. This is understandable in that the private sector is not only relatively weak in comparison to the private sector in Britain, but it also depends to a large extent on State capital. Unfortunately, the Guidelines and the State edicts were extremely vague on what role they expected local government to play in the development process, which should normally be the provision and maintenance of necessary infrastructure such as markets, council offices, roads, water supplies etc. (not industrial enterprises) to stimulate and support the private sector.

As we shall see in chapter 9, we will be resting our thesis on the belief that, if not done by dictatorial methods, rural manpower can only be mobilised for projects conceived and organised by the people as an expression of their own felt needs; the rural population is indifferent to innovations brought to them by central government agents whose ways of thought are unfamiliar. This is only one side of the coin, of course; undeniably, central government agents have frequently been prime movers in innovation and local development. Nevertheless, it is generally accepted that active participation in social and economic development can best be achieved within the framework of a small community. People are more willing to engage in development work for the benefit of a limited government unit whose decision making authorities they feel closely associated and trust, than they are to work for more remote authorities. Popular participation in development activities, it is believed, therefore calls for small-size units of local government - "if



too large, even with small population, remoteness from some of the people arises" (Guidelines, 1976, p.4.). But is there an optimum size; and is local government necessarily the primary unit for community development? In many cases, as we shall see in chapter 9, these activities could ideally be performed at the sub-communal level, the village or group of villages. In fact, the usefulness of the sub-communal unit as a catalyst for stimulating popular participation is a strong argument in favour of its establishment.

The empirical evidence we have discussed so far in this chapter does not support those who hypothesize that developing and developed countries cannot have identical local government reform objectives. We do accept that the emphasis placed on objectives varies from countries to countries but by and large the reform goals themselves can be very similar. These objectives, however, will falter and die if correct strategies are not designed to implement them.

## STRATEGIES

In chapter 1 we said that local government reform strategies differ from country to country: "the preferable mix of administrative reform strategies is in the main a function of the concrete circumstances of each particular reform" (Dror, 1976, p.127). The 1976 reform in Nigeria was initiated and executed by the military government, and like all military strategies, this was clothed in secrecy and it was quickly implemented with military precision. Thus, unlike in Britain, there was no room for serious research, debates, consultations, and legislative actions.

The assertion in the paragraph above, however, is not completely true. After all, what we have discussed in this thesis so far shows a lot of correspondence in their analyses of defects and the setting of objectives, steps that are very crucial in administrative reform strategies. In fact

this goes to support our claim that environmental differences between countries should not stop us from constructing strategies with universal applicability, with each country just needing to adapt them to her environment. Thus, in Nigeria and Britain, there were debates, researches and consultations, although acceptedly more comprehensive in the latter country. The Guidelines (1976, foreword) speak of 'tentative discussions', 'small co-ordinative committees', and of 'exhaustive consultations' between the States and the Federal Government on the one hand, and between the Federal Government and the traditional rulers on the other. This it not to deny, however, that there were marked differences in the strategies of Nigeria and Britain.

Firstly, unlike in Nigeria, Britain set up a Royal Commission with many local government experts on it. Britain decided to use a Royal Commission because they are regarded not only as agents of change but also as "the chief advisory bodies in the legislative and administrative process" and "their report is looked to as an exposition of the situation or problem" (Wheare, 1955, pp. 68-9). The debate they generate is regarded to be at least of equal importance to their investigative work and actual recommendations. Donnison concludes that commissions are a force to reckon with because "their work generated and focused a reforming impetus which would have been difficult to mobilise in other ways" (1968, p. 558). And local government reform is one of the delicate subjects where the Government feels that impetus from a royal commission would be better because with the councils, their associations and professional groups thinking first and foremost in terms of their interests and future role; with politicians weighing the political balance sheet; and with civil servants thinking very much in terms of administrative and legal feasibility, the Royal Commission provided the best chance for all and sundry to air their views. The Royal Commission therefore served a

valuable purpose in maintaining a reform momentum and in creating a new agenda for public debate.

The Royal Commission's need for prolonged public debate and the necessary administrative and legislative procedures lead us to the second point - reform pace or timing. It took Nigeria less than two years to initiate and implement the 1976 local government reform as against almost a decade (1966-74) taken in Britain despite the two year period given by Crossman who evidently hated the procedure and demise of the earlier Local Government Commissions for England and Wales (1958-65). The drastically short period of time taken to reform the local government system in Nigeria was due to a number of reasons:

- (a) The Murtala regime which came to power in 1975 had shown itself to be a 'ruthless', highly disciplined one that was above petty politicking;
- (b) that regime presented the local government reform as an urgent objective because it was a crucial element in their political programme of returning the country to civil rule in 1979. This was very attractive to the people and helped to weaken pockets of resistance;
- (c) the need for national unity, after the civil war, made it attractive and necessary to destroy the existing societal structure which endangered the Government's existence;
- (d) the governmental and administrative machinery needed thorough re-structuring to turn it into an efficient and effective instrument for achieving the development objectives;
- (e) the role of 'homo politicus' (see chapters 1 and 7) - Murtala's high standard of probity and his personal charisma lent him a lot of speed and weight in the reform efforts;
- (f) since it was a military regime, there was no room for serious, long-drawn debates and legislative procedures;
- (g) Nigeria could drastically and quickly reform its local government

since the system was fairly simple, very young (less than 25 years old as against the century-old system in Britain) and therefore easier to change. Damages caused by any failure will be consequently smaller, particularly in view of the possible gains to be derived from the reform;

(h) no local representative institutions could claim any long history and tradition of public service and consequently they felt less impelled to oppose reforms which might reduce their importance; and

(i) few vested interests are aggregated in institutions such as associations of local authorities and groups of local politicians who, jealous of their position and that of their members, will resist major changes likely to have any unfavourable effect.

Britain, on the other hand, had to settle for a gradual approach because:

- (a) As a democratic country she had to give the electorate the opportunity to discuss and debate the object and subject of the reform. In other words, the government could not dictatorially impose the reform with one stroke of the pen;
- (b) like all royal commissions, the Redcliffe-Maud Commission, by nature, had to proceed gradually in order to broaden the debate and this means having to deal with a wealth of materials, evidences etc. In all, some 2,156 witnesses submitted written evidence to the Commission;
- (c) gradual process enables adaptation of the local government structure to new needs and conditions, while allowing the people to adapt to the new structure, without disrupting the continuity of the operations of local institutions;
- (d) it minimizes resistance to reform since everybody would have had the opportunity to air his view;
- (e) the existing system of local government which was almost a century old had become a stable, highly complex and differentiated administrative system which could not be hastily changed overnight without causing disruptions;

(f) the decision making process is highly pluralistic. Innumerable individuals and organizations, whether connected to central government or not, were involved in the decision making process on the reform schemes; and

(g) local representative institutions, whose considerable influence was further strengthened by associations of local authorities and political parties, were an important source of resistance.

An important similarity in the 'time factor' is worth mentioning: the reforms in Nigeria and Britain were initiated and implemented by Governments which had newly come to office and which were therefore still popular with the public during this honeymoon period. Murtala came to power in 1975 after eight years of Gowon's rule which had become directionless, corrupt and irresponsible. In Britain, the Labour Party initiated the reform in 1966 and the Conservative Party implemented it at a time when they had newly come to office with a comfortable majority.

These differences in strategy, therefore, were inevitable because, as we have said, any government is conditioned in its choice regarding local government reform by the impact of environmental conditions on the structure and functions of local units. A government may prefer a particular strategy, but it must realise the difficulties that prevailing conditions will imply for effective implementation. If these conditions are not taken into account when changing the local government structure, the reform is unlikely to be successful. Many countries have experienced setbacks in introducing a new system of local government because it was unsuitable to local conditions; others have had to deviate considerably from their original intentions. The danger has proven particularly acute when a system is transplanted from one country to another, such as the doomed British-inspired system enacted in Nigeria in the 1950s.

Apart from the influence exercised by ecological conditions on the feasibility of reforming the system of local government, any local government reform will face active resistance as it alters the power structure of the community and thereby arouses groups or individuals who feel that their interests or power positions will be affected. People in authority are particularly affected by such threats to prominence. In Britain, this refers to members of local government bodies: the councillors, the mayors, the officers and the various local authority organizations, such as the AMC or the RDCA or more generally, NALGO. Generally, opposition to reform came from such quarters than from members of the general public. In Nigeria, strong resistance to local government reform came from local landlords, chiefs and especially emirs in northern Nigeria where the boundaries of the emirates co-incided with local government boundaries.

Local government reform has therefore become a complex and intricate process. The dissatisfaction regarding the existing systems in Nigeria and Britain, and the important role which local government plays in the process of political, social and economic development of Nigeria especially, prompted scholars, governments and associations of local authorities to use a more systematic approach to the problem. Before the 1974 and 1976 reforms, both countries 'modernized' and adopted their local government systems haphazardly and piecemeal, usually by removing functions from local government. The last reforms, however, show laudable trend towards a more systematic and wholesale approach, implying greater efforts to set clear objectives to the decentralization policy as a basis on which to re-design the system.

In a nutshell, the tendency towards greater rationality in local government reform is striking. This is not only shown by more systematic efforts, but also by the declining influence of less rational considerations,

such as identification with the social community, antagonism between urban and rural areas, between city and residential fringe municipalities. This new trend was aptly expressed in the Liberal Party's evidence to the Redcliffe-Maud Commission: 'It is clear that a thorough rationalization of local authorities is required'. The rational approach is also manifested by the search for quantifiable criteria such as functions, efficiency and planning, on which to determine size and boundaries of new units of local government and administration. Nevertheless, a government's ability to give decisive weight to rational consideration depends largely on their acceptance by the people and influential interest groups. Value-judgements and group interests still play a considerable role in the feasibility of reform achievement. The need for a rational approach led the Royal Commission and to some extent the Nigerian Government to ask for evidence, to carry out some research and to deduce principles upon which their recommendations were based.

#### Evidence and Consultations

The Redcliffe-Maud Commission commenced its work by sending a letter to every local authority requesting evidence within three months and an open invitation to the public was also made. In all, some 2,156 witnesses submitted written evidence. Of these 1,269 were individual local authorities (including 594 parishes) and 536 were individual members of the public, such as academics and local government officers and councillors. The remaining 350 or so included national and local political, amenity, business, professional and ratepayer associations. Oral evidence was taken from only a dozen bodies - ministries, local authority associations and NALGO.

In Nigeria, evidence of witnesses were taken and consultations were carried out although not at a scale comparable to the Redcliffe-Maud

Commission because of time factor. Indeed, the Federal Government asked each state to set up a Committee for Local Government Reform but this was after the Guidelines had been published and enacted as edicts by the states. The Federal Government had therefore previously diagnosed the defects of local government, set out the reform objectives, strategies and principles as contained in the Guidelines and had made up its mind as to the type of structure of local government it wanted. All that was left to the Committees to do was take evidence (mainly oral) from witnesses and make recommendations about possible new boundaries (see chapter 7). Unfortunately both the evidence of witnesses from the states and those allegedly collected by the Federal Government were never published. Everything was shrouded in secrecy. Thus all that we know about the evidence and consultations was the little fed to us in the Guidelines.

According to the Guidelines (1976, foreword), tentative discussions on local government reforms started in 1975 through the establishment of a small co-ordinative committee. Each state was asked to make consultations and the reports of these were submitted to Lagos for information and co-ordination. Then the whole country was divided into zones and each zone was asked to prepare papers on local government reform and particularly on the definition and functions of local government, its financing, the role of traditional authorities within any proposed local government structure, the Local Government Service structure etc. The zonal reports were discussed at various conferences in Enugu, Kaduna and Ibadan. The final conference was held in Ibadan to co-ordinate the recommendations of all the committees plus all the observations made by local government practitioners, traditional rulers, local council administrators and other interested parties. The amalgam of this process, after collation, was again submitted to a joint meeting of National Council of States and the Supreme Military Council. The document which emerged from this joint



meeting was submitted to a national conference of traditional rulers which was held in Lagos in July 1976.

The next step was that of a mass education campaign embarked upon by the traditional rulers. This writer was on the entourage of the Emir of Ilorin as he campaigned to solicit support for the reform effort throughout the former Ilorin Emirate. The campaign was not partisan; it was not to speak for or against candidates seeking election, but to get the people to support local government reform which would bring government nearer to them, and to get them to vote in the local elections. For instance, the Emir of Ilorin, like all the other traditional rulers, emphasized that the local government reform was to bring development to the local areas; and that the elections were not attempts to get the local people to pay more tax, but that they should vote so as to elect the person they thought most suitable as their councillor.

### Research

The desire for a more rational approach is further evidenced by the emphasis on research. The Redcliffe-Maud Commission was not ready to base its recommendations only on the evidence of witnesses. Indeed, what they heard convinced them of the need for further research involving an appraisal of existing information and research and the setting-up of specific research projects. As we said earlier, local government reform is now based on scientific studies, particularly to the determination of optimal areas and boundaries of local government units. Britain undertook research on these matters and ascertained its necessity: "The determination of the number and area of provisional authorities required for the proper organization of local government will necessitate careful and detailed studies". (Evidence of the Association of Municipal Corporations to the Royal Commission, 1969, para. 269 ). Even so, there is a

widespread lack of research activities. A main weakness of Nigerian local government reform is the lack of systematic research and educational effort in relation to the structure and operations of local government. There is little or no academic study of local government institutions and their role in the somewhat complicated federal structure.

Thus, serious research did not come into play in the Nigerian reform. The Government did not carry out any research, neither did they contract anybody to carry it out for them. Even in Britain, the limitations of general studies of local government as a whole or of aspects thereof are evident. Even though the Redcliffe-Maud Commission recognised the essence of research and in fact backed up their proposals by considerable research, they stated with regard to the relationship between the efficient operation of a certain function and the maximum and minimum size of local units: "...we simply do not know whether the time spent on research will produce enough hard facts about this problem...size cannot be statistically proved to have a very important effect on performance" (1969, Vol.1, para.219). This is all the more interesting because it has frequently been posited that research on size and boundaries of local units is easier to undertake and is more likely to produce useful results than on most other aspects of decentralization; many important variables, including intensity of social and economic relationships within an area, cost-benefit relationships of major public functions, popular interest in communal affairs, are at least quantifiable by approximation. Other issues, such as whether or not a new tier of government should be introduced, or of an optimal population of a local government, have hardly any objective measuring-rods, so that subjective or value-judgements or political expedience are likely to be decisive factors in policy-making. Research into the overall system of local government is even more problematic, although studies on environmental factors, for instance, may help reform efforts.

Another limitation is the absence of sufficient and reliable data, the compilation of which is expensive and requires highly trained manpower. The ensuing doubt regarding the usefulness of research reduces governmental willingness to vote necessary funds. Trained researchers are very rare in Nigeria. It is interesting to note, however, that the Royal Commission was therefore more influenced by departmental studies than by research, apparently because of the aforementioned problems. The Commission attached great importance to the Departmental studies, to "the subjective impressions of those who have direct, disinterested knowledge of the quality of local authority performance in two major services. They both showed that size was related to performance" (1969, Vol.1, para. 221).

Time, which we have discussed, is yet another difficult factor. The Murtala/Obasanjo regime had only four years to execute eight objectives, local government reform being only one of them. Moreover, being a military regime, there was little or no room for research. The reform effort was shrouded in almost total secrecy. Yet if a high level of perfection is craved, considerable time is necessary, but policy decisions frequently cannot await research results, and doubt regarding their reliability will make governments even less willing to be patient. This attitude will be further aggravated if the researchers disregard the political and administrative possibilities of implementing the proposals made.

Despite these limitations of research, it would be wrong to conclude that it is worthless. "A strength of many recent reports has been that their 'evidence' has not been confined to the 'opinions' of interested parties acting as witnesses. The provision of 'intelligence' is a valuable function of a support team..." (Wood, 1976, p.45). An important usefulness of the research on the effects of size on output was in fact to point the way for further, more sophisticated studies in the

future. A secondary value was that pitfalls emerged which the commissioners knew they must avoid in their report. On the other hand, lack of research led the Nigerian government to make questionable value-judgements and sweeping declarations, such as, that any local government with less than 150,000 people is inefficient (Guidelines, 1976p.4). It would be interesting to speculate on how the military regime hit upon their population range of 150,000 to 800,000 in the absence of research. But we can do no more than speculate.

#### Royal Commission's Recommendations

Using the evidence before them in considering their terms of reference and how best to achieve the reform objectives, the Royal Commission, like the Nigerian Government, posed one fundamental question: "What size of authority, or range of size, in terms of population and of area, is needed for the democratic and efficient provision of particular services and for local self-government as a whole?" (1969, Vol.1, para.8 ). The Commission answered this question by applying a number of principles (see Appendix III) to the country as a whole. They arrived at the conclusion that the greater part of England should be divided into 58 unitary authorities, embracing both town and country, responsible for almost all executive action in relation to local government services. The major towns which are the focal points for the commerce and cultural life of the surrounding area would also be the centre for local government. The Commission recommended that the minimum size for all the main services should be a population of some 250,000, and a maximum of 1 million population.

The Commission also expressed concern in terms of size and remoteness if an all-purpose unitary authority had a population greatly exceeding a million. To forestall this, it proposed a two-tier system for the three largest conurbations which was similar to the London pattern in

operation since 1963. In these three metropolitan areas around Birmingham, Liverpool and Manchester, responsibility for services would be divided between the top-tier or metropolitan authority, whose key functions would be planning, transportation, water supply, sewerage, refuse disposal, police, fire and ambulance services, and major development, and twenty lower-tier or metropolitan district authorities, whose key duties would be education, personal social services, health and housing.

The Commission also recommended that throughout the 61 areas, local councils initially representing the displaced boroughs, urban districts and parishes should be established to represent and communicate the wishes of cities, towns and villages in all matters of special concern to the inhabitants. Their major task would be to represent local opinion, but they would have the right to be consulted on matters of special interest to local inhabitants and could play a part with services appropriate to their resources and subject to the agreement of the main authority.

The Commission further recommended that these 61 unitary and metropolitan authorities should be grouped, together with Greater London, in eight provinces, each with its own provincial council. Provincial councils would be elected by the authorities for the unitary and metropolitan areas and Greater London, but would also include co-opted members of between 20 per cent and 25 per cent. The major task of these councils would be to settle the provincial strategy and planning framework within which the main authorities would operate, thus replacing the regional economic planning councils, and to collaborate with central government in the economic and social development of each province.

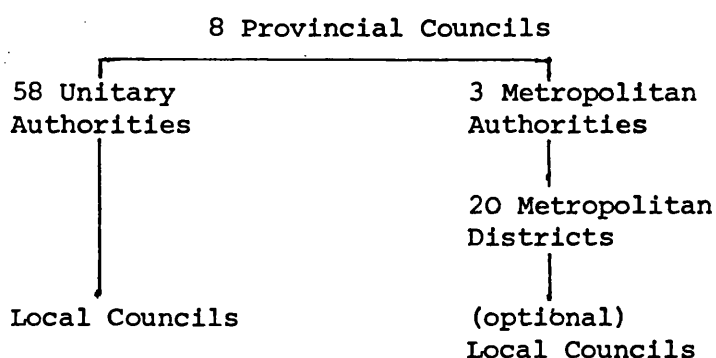
In line with the recommendations of the Maud Committee on Management, the Commission proposed the abolition of aldermen and limited council membership to 75. The number of committees should be small with a central committee to work out priorities. Every authority should appoint

a chief executive, chosen regardless of professional background.

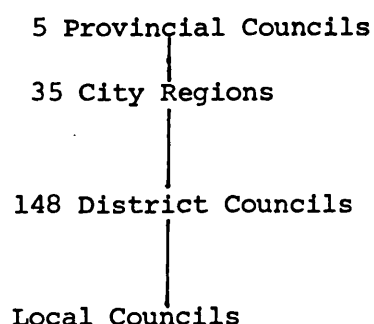
Delegation to officers should be freely exercised. Local offices should be established where the public can seek advice.

The main issue which the Commission faced was the choice between essentially one-tier and two-tier local government with Mr. Senior disagreeing with the Commission's proposals. He believed that the right approach was to create city regions consisting of five provincial councils, 35 city regions, 148 district councils and numerous local councils (see Diagram 6.4). His City Region concept was similar to the unitary authorities since both wanted the merging of town and country. But the 35 Senior City Regions were larger: 20 of the 35 would have populations in excess of 1 million each. All members of the Commission were agreed that units of this size were too large to be all-purpose authorities, hence his proposal of 148 district councils. Senior's City Regions would be directly elected and responsible for the planning, transport and development functions, capital investment programming, police, fire and education, while the directly elected district councils would have health, housing and personal services functions. The difference between the Commission's proposals and those of Mr. Senior can be illustrated by a diagram (Diagram 6.4).

DIAGRAM 6.4: REDCLIFFE-MAUD COMMISSION'S PROPOSALS



SENIOR'S PROPOSALS



As we said earlier, the main point of dispute was over the principle of unitary authorities. 35 City Regions perfectly fitted with the evidence of government departments but the Commission rejected this plan because they were convinced of the value of all-purpose county borough type authorities: "where responsibility for local government is undivided, then co-operation between services is much easier" (Richards, 1978,p.44). Since the units proposed by Senior were too big to be all-purpose authorities, smaller units had to be created. The Report noted that the evidence of the Department of Education and Science inspectors did not support the Department's claim that an education authority should have a population of half a million; the Commission therefore accepted unitary authorities of 250,000 people, or even less in a few cases. Senior's proposals were a radical departure from the existing structure, in contrast to the Commission's which tried to respect existing local boundaries wherever possible. As Richards says, "the argument against unitary authorities is that it is impossible to define areas which are suitable for the operation of all local government services. One is forced to choose either areas suitable for planning purposes which are too large and remote for personal services, or a frame work suitable for personal services, that is too small for planning" (1978,p.44) (see Appendix 111 for details). In short, the unitary concept of the Royal Commission was clearly influenced by a systems view of local government which emphasized the interdependency of the diverse activities of local authorities and the need to plan comprehensively for goals that could not be achieved by any one service in isolation.

#### Reaction to Commission's Report

Public reaction to the unitary authority concept was in general unfavourable. Of the four principal local authority associations

only one, the Association of Municipal Corporations, supported the proposals, but the others, like the Conservative Party, favoured a two-tier system to prevent the risk of rural interests being disregarded by dominant urban authorities. The Senior alternative proposals appeared to carry greater support "but this ignored the fact that the Senior scheme would have produced fewer and larger education authorities and that his proposed boundaries would do more to disturb present administrative and social pattern" (Richards, 1978, p.45). There was an evident desire for increased representation, more 'democracy' and a minimum of reform.

A Government White Paper (Reform of Local Government in England) in 1970 proposed a new local government structure based on 51 unitary areas and five metropolitan areas - Merseyside (Liverpool), Selnece (Manchester), West Midlands, West Yorkshire and South Hampshire. The Commission's proposals for eight provincial councils were deferred but the establishment of local councils was accepted. Other recommendations included the abolition of the office of alderman, improvements in councillors' allowances, fewer committees, delegation of more detail to officers, review of non-financial controls and less statutory control.

The Labour Government intended to promote a Bill in the 1971-2 session of Parliament to introduce the new structure. However, in the June 1970 General Election the Labour lost power, and with it, their concept of unitary authorities. The Conservative Government which came to power favoured a two-tier structure, and in 1971 published their own White Paper (Local Government in England: Government Proposals for Reorganization, HMSO, 1971) containing alternative proposals which formed the basis of the Local Government Act 1972 which was implemented in 1974 (see Appendix IV).

In 1970 the Labour Government had also proposed a new local government structure for Wales based on three unitary authorities: one for Newport and Monmouthshire, one for Cardiff and East Glamorgan, and a third for Swansea and West Glamorgan. The remainder of the country was divided



into counties and local councils. The proposals were largely opposed by the Welsh population and did not materialise because of the subsequent change of Government (see Appendix IV for details of the various proposals).

#### Local Government Reform Principles in Nigeria

In Nigeria, the Government applied the following general principles to the country also (Guidelines, 1976, pp.3-6):

- (a) All the statutory and public service functions of local government should be concentrated in multipurpose single-tier institutions with complete and self-contained budgets, so that the whole system of local government within an area can be identified, costed and co-ordinated;
- (b) in order to achieve sufficiently large scales of operations to be able to perform all the types of functions reasonably economically, whilst remaining sufficiently local, local governments should, as far as possible serve local populations of between 150,000 and 800,000, provided that these limits may be varied in exceptional geographical circumstances, and provided further that there should be no upper limit to the size of local governments covering major towns so as to ensure that each town is within a single unit;
- (c) regardless of population, no town or city should be split between two primary local governments. The whole planning area surrounding a town should be in the same primary local government as the town itself. This should apply not only to places which have been formally constituted as Planning Areas now, but those which are likely to be so constituted within the next ten years. Where two or more towns, whether they are actually contiguous or not, are nevertheless close to each other as to make up a conurbation, the whole should, with the planning peripheries, be in the same local government area. Urban local governments should be

exceptional. No urban area with a population of less than 150,000 should be established by separating it from its surrounding former Division(s) and even at that level, the remaining area should not have less than 150,000 inhabitants. The special requirements of towns within local government areas can best be catered for by subordinate Town Councils;

(d) at the other end of the scale, local governments with less than 150,000 total population are in some cases inevitable especially where population densities are very low, but local governments covering less than 150,000 should be kept as few as possible. In no State should the average population of local governments be below 150,000. Only in this way can more sophisticated services be provided. Very small local governments, apart from their facing financial disadvantages, cannot offer attractive career prospects for well-qualified staff. Otherwise one of the fundamental objectives of the reforms, which is to raise the quality of local public services, will not be met. Poor quality staff are unlikely to provide good quality services;

(e) local governments should, in most cases, be coterminous with Divisions, with such adjustments as may be appropriate. Some existing very large local authorities already have sub-divisions within them, called Administrative Areas, Development Areas etc. Again, with appropriate adjustments, these could serve as the basis for the new local governments. Where large existing local authorities are to be sub-divided, they should be within the overall limits above, and be as few as possible. An average population of 400,000 or more within a large local government should be preferred;

(f) it is not the intention of Government to destroy the organic unity of the traditional chiefdoms, emirates or similar institutions. Where a

large traditional emirate or chiefdom is to be subdivided into several local governments, the latter will not become 'emirates' or acquire new traditional heads. The local governments will be modern functional institutions. The traditional emirates and chiefdoms will remain, although their functions will be changed to accord with the present day circumstances;

(g) where a local government is coterminous with an existing local government authority with a single Emir or Paramount Chief, and it is desired that this Emir or Paramount Chief shall be the active President of the new Local Government Council, there will be a single council only for the local government, with the Emir or Paramount Chief as President. This may also apply if the local government consists of more than one former emirate or other traditional authority, but one of the latter cover the greater majority of the whole population, and if the Emir or Paramount Chief is fully acceptable to the populations of the minority elements as council president. The minor chiefs would in this case be members of the local government councils;

(h) where a local government is coterminous with a single former local government authority, it may be more consonant with local tradition or opinion that the Emir or Paramount Chief should be ceremonial president only. In this case, for normal business, the council should be presided over by a chairman. In such cases there may be a Traditional Council in addition to the Local Government Council.

The application of these principles or recommendations will be discussed in the next chapter, 'Implementation', because they were mandatorily implemented to the letter by the State Governments.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### IMPLEMENTATION

#### INTRODUCTION

Accepting the concepts and implementing them are two very different things (Taylor, 1972, p.251).

We pointed out in Chapter 1 that the implementation stage is the achilles heel of administrative reform because most reforms fail at this stage. This is due to the fact that most reformers are not genuine in their intentions or because they are outsiders to the situation they are trying to reform. In other cases, highly prestigious bodies like the Redcliffe-Maud Commission (1966-69) invested with the task of reform discovered that their recommendations were politically unacceptable and they therefore fell by the wayside. This was not too surprising since the Commission was appointed by a Labour Government that was no longer in office at the implementation stage. The Conservative Government did accept the Commission's diagnosis of local government defects, their reform objectives and strategies, and the recommendation that a population of 250,000 was necessary if an authority was to be an effective provider of major services such as education.

Despite the fact that most of the recommendations of the Commission were modified or rejected (see Appendix IV), the reform was still implemented because the vast majority of proximate decision-makers had broadly accepted the need for reform which revolved around the generally accepted weaknesses of the former structure of local government. Second, the Government, the Opposition and the electorate were committed to local administrative reform. This became apparent in 1967-8 when several major recommendations of the Mallaby, Maud and especially the Fulton

Reports were accepted. Third, Harold Wilson, the Prime Minister, made it clear that the Government intended to act quickly when he presented the Redcliffe-Maud Report to the Commons. Fourth, the Conservative Party led by Mr. Heath had campaigned in 1970 on a platform of modernizing government, and little wonder that Mr. Walker a close associate of Mr. Heath and an ambitious politician who was keenly interested in local government reform as shadow minister, became the minister in-charge.

Thus, all the crucial implementation variables (see Chapter 1) were favourable at the passing of the Local Government Bill in 1971 and the consequent Local Government Act 1972. Britain undertook a comprehensive reform (as against selective reform or incrementalism) because the leadership was strong, committed, willing and united. The time (see Chapter 6) was propitious: the Conservative Party had just won the general election in 1970 and was still popular in 1971-2. Many civil servants, traditionally renown for opposing reform, supported this one in principle. A good example is Dame Evelyn Sharp, a powerful and experienced permanent secretary. The reform agents (the Commission) were also strong and committed. They were respected experts and they maintained the reform momentum by generating a lot of public debate and an atmosphere of reform. The socio-political environment was equally favourable. The electorate was keenly interested in seeing some changes: there was "widespread agreement among witnesses on the need to change the present local government system" (Royal Commission on Local Government in England, 1969, Vol.1, para.109). Both the Government and the Opposition were also agreed on the need for structural reforms and whatever arguments ensued were restricted to the type of reform; "at no stage was a serious anti-reform lobby in evidence" (Wood, 1976, p.183).

A comprehensive local government reform was also carried through in Nigeria because the Murtala/Obasanjo Government which initiated and implemented it was keenly interested in the reform. It was such 'a

crucial element in (their) political programme' that they could not afford to entrust it completely unto a commission (see Chapter 6). We should note, however, that the recommendations of the Federal Government were highly influenced by the 1974 Public Service Review Commission (Udoji Commission). The following are some of the recommendations of the Commission which were adopted by the Murtala/Obasanjo regime: (a) States operating a multi-tier local government system should re-examine the structure with a view to adopting a single-tier system; (b) Ministries of Local Government should establish research and development planning units to assist local government in improving the effectiveness of their administration; (c) The Council, which should continue as the policy making body for the Local Authority, should forbear from interfering with administrative matters, which should be fully delegated to the Executive Secretary; (d) The revenue-sharing arrangement between state and local government should be reviewed with the object of ensuring that local authorities are provided with adequate funds for performance of their functions; (e) In order to be able to recruit and retain competent staff the salaries and conditions of service of local government staff should not be less favourable than those of civil servants; (f) Each state should establish a Local Government Service Board to develop and implement common policies dealing with personnel matters and to apply the same in all local government authorities in the state; and (g) Statutory recognition should be given to the administrative function of traditional rulers, and they should be more closely integrated as a parallel but complementary system for projecting government image at the local level (Public Service Review Commission, 1974, pp.118-133).

Like in Britain, all the implementation variables were propitious at the time of implementation of the Nigerian reform: the socio-political environment was favourable; a new regime had just come to power in 1975 after almost a decade of Gowon's corrupt government (see Chapter 5). The people were definitely yearning for a change and they welcomed the coup d'etat that

brought Murtala to power, and his promise to reform local government. This was shown by the nation-wide demonstration in support of the new regime and its policies; the press called the advent of Murtala's regime 'a golden opportunity' for the 'rebirth of a nation' (Nigerian Herald, 6 August 1975); and the university students who since 1972 had had an average of three violent riots every year against Gowon's regime not only welcomed Murtala's government but the National Union of Nigerian Students placed a two-year self-imposed ban on rioting as a gesture of its support for Murtala. The political structure of the nation was also favourable to reform. The military had no room for legislative processes, arguments and opposition. This not only killed any resistance to reform but it also speeded up the implementation. The reform agents, the military, were very sincere in their attempt to reform the local government structure. This genuineness and sincerity of purpose led the Military Government to undertake the reform themselves rather than entrust it to a commission which would have wasted time and given rise to dissension of opinion as to whether or not reform was necessary, and if necessary, what structure it should take. The reform strategy (see chapter 6) matched the occasion perfectly. One of the strategies which we have not mentioned, however, was the compulsory retirement, immediately after the regime came to power, of known 'dead-wood' civil servants who would have opposed or delayed the reform. These civil servants had been known to block past reform attempts because their interests were at stake. Their retirement aided the serene and auspicious socio-political environment and strengthened the image and power of the Government.

Another strategy which the Military Government used and which we briefly mentioned in the last chapter, was to employ the blessing and co-operation of traditional rulers. They had perceived real or imaginary threats that they would be adversely affected by the reform but the Government turned the scale in their favour by promising to restore their status and powers which had been whittled down by previous governments :

Nothing in these reforms could be construed to mean an attempt at reducing or abolishing the traditional functions of our Emirs, Obas, and Chiefs. On the contrary, the reforms recognize the crucial nature of the position of the traditional authorities and care has been taken to preserve the organic unity of our traditional institutions and societies (Guidelines, 1976, foreword).

The support of the traditional rulers gave the reformers an added influence and power. By eliciting their support, the Government overcame the greatest hurdle and thus they had ample room to implement the reform smoothly and quickly.

In Lee's matrix, time and leadership are two crucial variables (1970, pp.77-89). His hypothesis about reform implementation is confirmed in both Nigeria and Britain: that a comprehensive strategy can be implemented if the leadership of reform agents and the internal structure of the reform agency are strong and united and if the social environment and the political structure are favourable. The first variable, 'time', we have discussed in chapter 6 because it is a strategy that is equally important to the implementation stage as to the other stages of administrative reform. Leadership or the role of 'homo politicus' which we briefly mentioned in that chapter too and which we have briefly touched on here will be discussed fully later in this chapter. Backoff's hypothesis that the greater the comprehensiveness, complexity, and magnitude of changes, the lesser the probability of implementation can only be assumed to be true a priori. It is certainly difficult to prove in the case of the 1974 and 1976 reforms in Britain and Nigeria respectively because his hypothesis failed to take into consideration other important variables such as leadership, time and socio-political environment of the country concerned. The changes in both countries were complex and comprehensive, yet they were implemented because the reformers had the will and the power to do so, and the time and socio-political atmosphere were propitious.

We will divide this chapter into two: the legislative process of implementation, and the actual changes (structures, elections, committees, etc.) that were made. In the first part we will concentrate our attention



on Britain because the legislative process was lacking in the case of Nigeria. We mentioned in the last chapter, though, that some consultations did take place in Nigeria. In the second part we will concentrate on the changed system in Nigeria particularly because the changes that took place in Britain are fairly familiar and relatively easy to obtain. We will, however, reduce some of the structural changes in Britain to an appendix (see Appendix IV).

## THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS 1971-2

### The White Paper

In February 1971 the new Conservative Government's proposals emerged in a twelve-page White Paper (Local Government in England: Government Proposals for Reorganization) and a consultative document was published for Wales (Welsh Office, 1971). The White Paper concerning local government in England recognized the validity of the arguments for large authorities for the effective and efficient operation of some services and for smaller authorities for grass-roots democracy but argued that regional or provincial areas would be too large for the operation of local government services. Hence the Conservative Government 'solution' of a two-tier structure was proposed, consisting essentially of counties and districts (Sharpe, 1978, p.83). Metropolitan counties were proposed in the densely populated conurbations, each divided into metropolitan districts having more powers than other districts. The detailed geographical application of these principles propounded by the White Paper were set out in a separate circular, Department of the Environment Circular 8/71.

Thus there are two styles of local government system, the metropolitan and the non-metropolitan. What distinguishes them is the allocation of responsibility for education, including libraries, and the personal social services (see Appendix I). The White Paper argued that a population range of between 250,000 and a million was needed for effective performance

of these functions. In the conurbations it is possible to form second-tier districts compact in size which fall within this population range. Here the districts can undertake education and the social services. The Conservative scheme of six metropolitan counties (Merseyside, Greater Manchester, West Midlands, West Yorkshire, South Yorkshire and Tyneside) which differed slightly from the Labour's in that South Yorkshire and Tyneside were included but South Hampshire was left out, were to have 34 metropolitan districts.

In order to enhance representative democracy and make for intimacy of the electorate and their representatives, it was proposed that the second-tier authorities in the rural areas should have a population far below 250,000. The pattern here is similar to the previous one in that powers should be distributed between county and district with major functions remaining with the former. 38 non-metropolitan counties were recommended by the White Paper and the accompanying Circular from the Department of the Environment outlined boundaries for the counties. Isle of Wight, the smallest non-metropolitan county with a population of 111,000 is the only one that does not pass the 250,000 limit. At the other extreme were some non-metropolitan counties with populations of over a million. The largest non-metropolitan counties, Essex, Hampshire and Kent seem too big to be satisfactory representative authorities responsible for education and social services. The boundaries for metropolitan districts were also outlined in the Department of the Environment Circular. Here the population range lay between 182,000 for South Tyneside and 1,168,000 for Birmingham.

A radical reorganisation of boroughs and urban and rural districts was proposed to provide larger districts which would have greater resources and thus be better fitted to undertake the responsibilities allocated to them. This turned out not to be too radical since many of the districts had a population and rateable resources far below those of the defunct county boroughs. Clearly the status of a local authority was to depend not only on size but also on the nature of the area

and its surroundings. A Local Government Boundary Commission was to make proposals for the arrangement of districts outside the metropolitan counties and its report in 1972 proposed 278 districts with an average population of about 100,000. In the most remote rural areas district population fall as low as 40,000. As far as possible the new district map was formed by amalgamations of existing authorities.

The place of the rural parish was also recognised by the White Paper but it was to have powers rather than duties. It was subsequently agreed that former boroughs and urban districts with a maximum population of 20,000 could form third-tier councils.

The effect of these reforms varied from place to place. Only district boundary changes affected the five shires of Salop, Wiltshire, the Isle of Wight, Cornwall and Hertfordshire. In other places, adjustments to county boundaries and/or the merging of former counties either in part or as a whole took place. Many of the new shires were amalgamated with one or more former county boroughs, which, inevitably, resented their reduced status. The practical effect was less felt where the county borough was already the geographical headquarters of the administrative county. Plymouth, Portsmouth and Southampton, for instance, felt it more than Norwich and Nottingham. The practical effect was most felt in the metropolitan areas where not only were there new boundaries, but also new types of authority.

The Welsh consultative document proposed that Wales should be re-organised into seven new counties and 36 districts. Glamorgan was to be split into two and five other counties Clwyd, Dyfed, Gwent, Gwynedd and Powys were to be established along the lines of their English counterparts. The Local Government Act later divided Glamorgan into three sections with South Glamorgan containing only two districts, Barry and Cardiff. Community councils could also be created at the parish level (see Figure 7.1).

### The Bill

The Bill of 351 pages which was presented to Parliament on November 4th, 1971 contained no major changes from those discussed above except that all six metropolitan counties had been reduced in size, with territory being conceded to the neighbouring counties. Glossop, Skipton and Harrogate, and Ellesmere Port, which were originally planned to be in Greater Manchester (Tameside district), West Yorkshire (Leeds district), and Meryseyside (Wirral district) respectively were returned to their traditional counties. In addition, Durham, Northumberland, Cheshire, Lancashire, Derbyshire, Staffordshire, North Yorkshire and Warwickshire were to benefit from smaller changes. There were also exchanges of territory between shire counties, designed, again, to restore 'natural loyalty of people towards their counties'. The new counties of Avon and Teeside (later to be renamed Cleveland) were reduced in size, the former losing the Frome area to Somerset, the latter Easington to Durham and a large part of Stokesley Rural District to North Yorkshire. Brackley was returned to Northamptonshire, Lowestoft to Suffolk, Long Eaton to Derbyshire, Aldershot to Hampshire, and the Ingleton area of the Yorkshire dales to North Yorkshire. Furthermore, Sedbergh Rural District Council was transferred from Yorkshire to Cumbria. It was proposed that Colchester and the adjacent north-east Essex area were to be added to Suffolk, leaving a smaller Essex county based more clearly on Chelmsford and Southend, on the grounds that the Colchester-Ipswich area should be treated as one and that most councils in the area had asked for the transfer. The new Humberside county was extended to take in a substantial part of north Lincolnshire (Grimsby and Scunthorpe). New counties, most of which were continuations of existing counties, were also renamed in the Bill. The name Tyneside was changed during the parliamentary proceedings to Tyne and Wear. Malvern became known as Hereford and Worcester. Teeside was renamed Cleveland but Avon, Cumbria and Humberside retained their names.

In the allocation of functions the Government had made concessions to the AMC and the district council associations which gave the districts responsibility for clean air zone, the maintenance of minor urban roads, municipal public transport undertakings (except in metropolitan counties), and some local plan-making.

Taking into consideration the politico-administrative importance of local government reform, one can say that the Bill had an easy passage through the Committee Stage and in Parliament, except for matters of details. The Labour Party's opposition to the Bill was weakened by their acceptance of the unpopular Royal Commission's scheme of unitary authority. The Labour Party's opposition to responsibility for education being given to districts instead of metropolitan counties was also unpopular since it would diminish representation and participation. The Labour Party also criticized the Government for drawing boundaries too tightly around the metropolitan areas with the consequence that these authorities would find it difficult or impossible to obtain the land needed for housing development in the foreseeable future. Again, this proved unpopular because the 'fringe' areas of the metropolitan counties were content to remain rural or semi-rural rather than being included in the conurbations. Furthermore, the Labour Party accused the Conservative Government of gerrymandering because it had merged Labour controlled county boroughs in Conservative-controlled counties. More specifically, the division of Glamorgan into three parts is so flagrantly party-political that it evoked an unprecedented accusation of indefensible political gerrymandering from Lady Sharp, the former Permanent Secretary of the old Ministry of Housing and Local Government (Sharpe, 1978, p.84). New Society dubbed the Bill "a pure political carve up, devoid of all justification in terms of social geography or of good planning" (18 February 1971, p.259). We return to this point below (see section on 'The Role of "Homo Politicus"').

Thus, as Richards puts it, "during the second reading debate in the House of Commons on the Bill the most lively issue concerned a question of

procedure rather than substance: it was whether the proposals for Wales should have been presented in a separate Bill" (1978, p.50). Although the standing committee met on at least 51 occasions and the report stage was lengthy, no major changes in principles took place and only alterations of detail were made. Only minor structural and technical amendments, mostly introduced by the Government, took place in the House of Lords, except for the return of refuse disposal to counties from non-metropolitan districts, which the Government had proposed but which was defeated in Parliament.

The Bill had a relatively easy passage in Parliament despite the importance of local government reform because 'a general weariness had surrounded the whole question'. As we said before, there was a general agreement that some reorganisation was necessary if further central government's erosion of local powers was to be stemmed, and if the capability of local government was to be enhanced. Secondly, there was general acceptance of the 1972 plan among the public, the Government and the association of local authorities (except, of course, the Association of Municipal Corporations). "The Royal Commission had ignored the extent to which the county was a social unit as well as an administrative entity and that as a social unit it commanded considerable loyalty. In contrast the Conservative plan respected existing boundaries to a far greater extent, especially in relation to the counties" (Richards, 1978, p.51). Thirdly, although there were protests, lobbies and campaigns, these were unsuccessful because they were uncoordinated and were sometimes confusing. Lastly, although there were a few individual MPs who tried to secure changes favourable to their constituencies, it was clear that there were more urgent social and economic issues facing Parliament. "In 1972 local government was far from being top of the political agenda" (Richards, 1978, p.51). Thus, the Bill became an Act on 26 October 1972.

### Local Government Act 1972

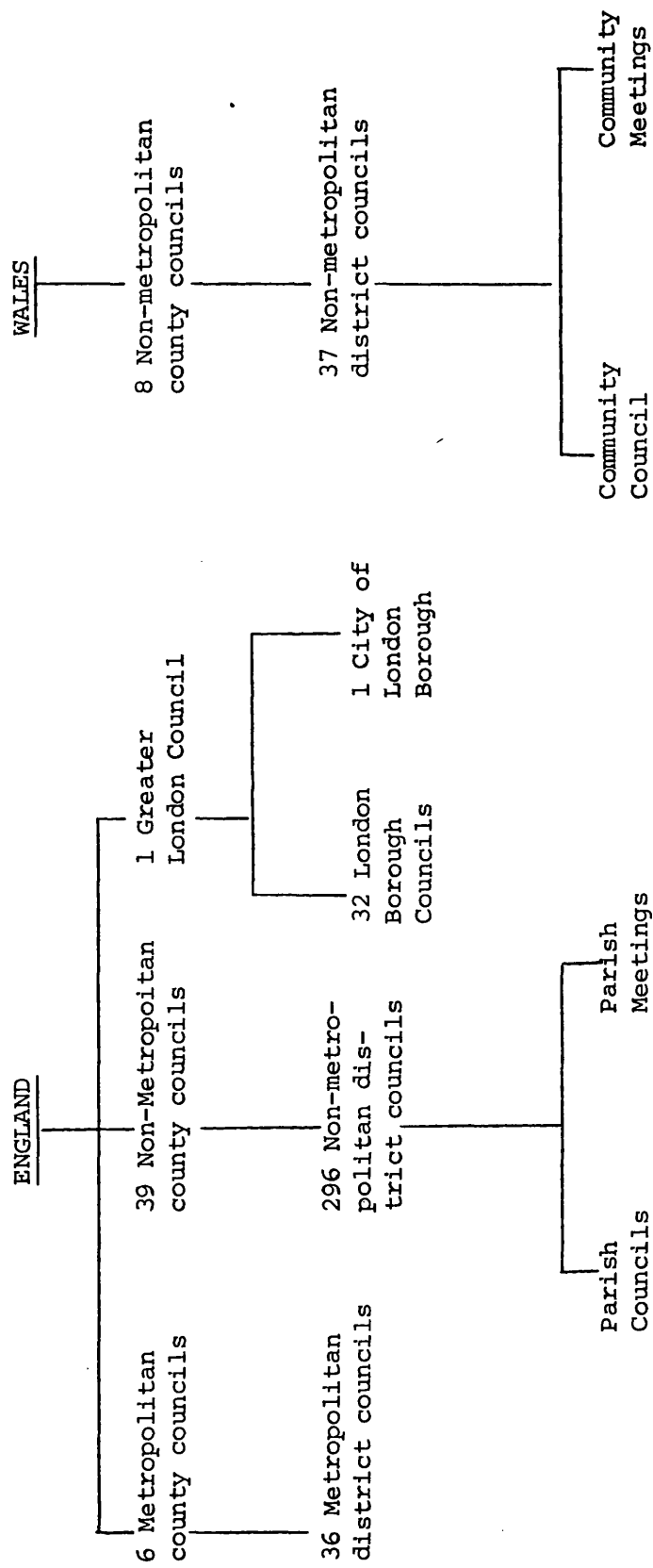
The Local Government Act 1972 gave effect to the proposals contained in the Bill creating a new local government structure in England and Wales, with a relocation of functions. It also contained new provisions covering the administration of local authorities including such matters as registration of electors and conduct of elections, general procedural arrangements, staffing, discharge of functions and finance. This Act largely replaced the Local Government Act 1933 and incorporated, with some modifications, the provisions of the London Government Act 1963 relating to local government in London. However, the structure of London local government was barely changed and remained as contained in the 1963 Act.

The new structure contained in the 1972 Act became fully operational on 1 April 1974. The Act divided England and Wales into counties and districts, with Monmouthshire and Newport transferred to Wales. There are 45 counties in England and eight in Wales, of which only five are entirely coincident with the boundaries of the former administrative counties. Six of the English counties are termed metropolitan counties, embracing the major urban conurbations of Greater Manchester, Merseyside, South Yorkshire, Tyne and Wear, West Yorkshire and West Midlands. The remaining 39 English counties are often referred to as non-metropolitan counties (see Figure 7.1).

In the six metropolitan counties there are 36 metropolitan districts with similar constitutions to those of other districts but extended functions (see Appendix I). There are 296 non-metropolitan districts in England and 37 in Wales, some of which are wholly urban, some wholly rural and many others both urban and rural in composition. This has resulted in a large reduction in the number of second-tier authorities, which previously amounted to 1,333, made up of county and non-county boroughs and urban and rural districts (see Figure 7.1). District councils were empowered to submit a petition to the Privy Council for borough status and many sub-

FIGURE 7.1

LOCAL GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE IN ENGLAND AND WALES





missions were made and approved. Procurement of borough status entitles the council to elect a mayor and deputy mayor but has little other practical importance.

At third-tier level, English rural parishes remain and new parishes may be created and existing ones abolished. Hence the pattern of parishes can change, and as the earlier distinction between rural and urban districts has been removed, there is no restriction on the districts in which parishes can be created. Former rural parish councils continue and new ones were to be established in former boroughs and urban districts where the Secretary of State so directed. The population limit for new parish councils is either 150 or 200 electors, the lower limit applying where a parish meeting has requested one. In Wales, community councils supersede the former boroughs, urban districts and rural parishes.

Permanent Local Government Boundary Commissions were established for England and Wales to review local government boundaries and local electoral arrangements. The reorganisation reduced the total number of principal councils (above third-tier level) in England and Wales, including London, from 1,425 to 456. There was, however, still a great diversity of population, areas and rateable values within the same category of authority, although much less than before the reform (see Tables 7.1 and 7.2 and compare with Tables 5.1 and 5.2).

The hiatus between the Act in 1972 and its actual implementation in 1974 was necessary in order to make adequate preparations for the changeover from the old authorities to the new. In particular it was necessary to assemble resources of staff and accommodation, to establish administrative arrangements and for the new councils to become familiar with their functions and activities. Time was needed for elections to be held (between March and June 1973) so that the new councils could take up their executive responsibilities and the 1972 Act provided a period of overlap during which the old and the new authorities co-existed, although the

TABLE 7.1 : POPULATION RANGES FOR EACH TYPE OF AUTHORITY

| Type of Authority                  | Lowest Population               | Highest Population           |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------|
| English Metropolitan Counties      | Tyne and Wear<br>(1,193,000)    | West Midlands<br>(2,777,000) |
| English non-Metropolitan counties  | Isle of Wight<br>(111,000)      | Hampshire<br>(1,450,000)     |
| Welsh Counties                     | Powys<br>(101,000)              | Mid Glamorgan<br>(540,000)   |
| London boroughs                    | Kingston-on-Thames<br>(136,000) | Croydon<br>(329,000)         |
| English Metropolitan Districts     | Souty Tyneside<br>(182,000)     | Birmingham<br>(1,168,000)    |
| English non-Metropolitan districts | Teeside<br>(24,000)             | Avon<br>(422,000)            |
| Welsh districts                    | Radnor<br>(18,670)              | Cardiff<br>(286,000)         |

SOURCE : Compiled from Richards, 1978.

TABLE 7.2 : RATEABLE VALUE (IN £MN) RANGES FOR EACH TYPE OF AUTHORITY

| Type of Authority                 | Lowest Rateable Value  | Highest Rateable Value       |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------|
| English metro-politan counties    | Tyne and Wear<br>(116) | West Midlands<br>(386)       |
| English non-metropolitan counties | Isle of Wight<br>(12)  | Essex<br>(205)               |
| Welsh counties                    | Powys<br>(8)           | South Glamorgan<br>(45)      |
| London boroughs                   | Sutton<br>(26)         | City of Westminster<br>(311) |

SOURCE : Compiled from Richards, 1978.

new ones had no operational functions at that time.

Before the new councils were elected, joint committees were set up for the new administrative areas composed of elected representatives of the appropriate existing authorities. The essence of these committees was to prepare a mass of advice for the in-coming regime, make arrangements for the smooth take-over by the new authorities and to help co-ordinate policies and strategies. They were also to take basic management decisions, including those on committee and departmental structures, ideally adopting a corporate management approach as advocated in the Bains Report (see chapter 6).

One particular difficult problem in the change-over period was the appointment of staff by the new local authorities. The main objectives were to redeploy existing staff in the most effective way, to protect the interests of staff and to assist the public by the smooth and efficient transfer of functions. In consequence the customary procedure of public advertisement was used only for a limited number of very senior posts, mainly chief executives to county councils and metropolitan districts. Most other senior professional, technical and administrative posts were filled from among local government officers within limited recruitment areas. Where this procedure did not produce a suitable applicant, the Local Government Staff Commission normally gave approval for the national advertisement of the post but restricted it to serving local government officers in England (excluding London) or Wales. This restriction was intended to safeguard the interests of staff during the reorganisation period when many posts were at risk and some might face redundancy. The majority of staff undertaking specific functions were transferred to the appropriate new authority without formal selection.

#### Implementation in Nigeria

As we pointed out earlier, local government reform in Nigeria lacked the legislative process because the country had no legislature at the

time. All that we will do here, therefore, is give a broad analysis of the arrangements that were made to bring the implementation to success. Details will be discussed in the next section. There were consultations, however, (see chapter 6) but these were more or less part of the Military Government's strategy to facilitate the implementation of local government reform. We must note, however, that everything that we have said concerning the Guidelines was mandatory on the states. All the recommendations contained in the Guidelines were to be adhered to. Indeed in order to enhance its legality, it was renamed The Draft Local Government Edict and the contents of all subsequent edicts by the states were identical to the Draft. The Guidelines and the Draft therefore formed the common denominator for all the states but their provisions (detailed substance, not principles) were adapted, to a limited extent, by individual states in order to accommodate local circumstances. Here then is another contrast to the reform process in Britain: the local authorities are created by the Parliament in Britain, which is typical of a unitary system of government but in Nigeria local authorities are created by and derive their powers from the states which is typical of a federal system of government.

In 1976 the Federal Military Government directed that all local authorities in the country be dissolved. For example, the existing Divisional Development Councils and Development Committees in Bendel State were dissolved on 26th May 1976 and Anambra State abolished the Divisional, Urban and Community Councils of the former Divisional Administration system on August 1st. Kwara dissolved its Local Government Authorities and Cross River State its Development Administration system on August 1st 1976.

All the states promulgated local government edicts (e.g., Kwara State Local Government Edict No.8 of 1976, Rivers State Local Government Edict No.8 of 1976, Kaduna State Local Government Edict No.1 of 1977, etc) which provided the necessary legal status on which the new authorities

were to operate. They made provisions for elections into the new councils and for the establishment of Traditional Councils and Local Government Service Boards. Perhaps their most important provision, like the Guidelines, was that for the first time the whole country was to have a uniform unitary system of local government: "All the statutory and public service functions of local government in Nigeria should be concentrated in multi-purpose single-tier institutions called Local Governments" (Guidelines, 1976, p.3). Subordinate councils could be created but these were to have no powers, functions and financial allocations except those derived from their 'parent' local government. This again is an interesting contrast to the multi-tier local government system in Britain.

Apart from these statutory measures, necessary administrative actions were also taken to ensure the successful implementation of these reforms. Caretaker Committees were set up during the transition and administrative officers (usually state civil servants) termed Sole Administrators were appointed. These were to see to the smooth changeover from the old authorities to the new. Their duty included (a) The transfer of functions from the states ministries to the local authorities; (b) the transfer, recruitment or secondment of staff from the states civil services; (c) the preparation of estimates for the new local authorities; and (d) the assessment and take-over of physical assets.

Steering Committees which were designated Implementation Committees in some states were set up (a) to make all necessary arrangements for the registration of voters, compilation of voters' list, erection of polling booths, printing of ballot papers, etc; (b) to delineate or divide each local government into single member constituencies for the purpose of the elections; (c) to make general arrangements for the planning, supervision and conduct of elections; (d) to study in depth the relevant policy papers containing the Federal Government decisions on local government reform and what their implications are for each state; (e) to demarcate, with the help of Government surveyors, etc.if necessary, the state into a number

of local government authorities; (f) to merge or divide areas into local authorities in order to achieve the minimum population of 150,000 as directed by the Federal Government; and (g) to take traditional loyalties into consideration when making such demarcations; or as the Guidelines put it, "the new local authorities must be coterminous with existing Divisions, with such adjustments as may be appropriate" (1976,p.5)

Elections into local councils, which could be direct or indirect, were held in various parts of the country between November 1976 and January 1977. All these arrangements were completed at different dates in different states between January and February 1977. In accordance with the provision of the Guidelines and the edicts the 75 per cent elected and 25 per cent nominated councillors elected their chairmen (in reality each council had to submit a list of three candidates to the Governor who alone could make one of them the chairman - see chapter 8 for our comment) and supervisory councillors and the new local government councils were inaugurated on 6th January 1977 in Bendel, 24th February in Benue, and 10th February 1977 in Imo State. By 1st April 1977 Nigeria's 299 local authorities became fully operational.

#### THE REFORMED LOCAL GOVERNMENT SYSTEM

##### Structure

Whereas Britain opted for a two-tier system which apparently strikes a compromise between the need for large areas on grounds of functional efficiency and the desirability of smaller units in the interest of community representation and involvement, the Guidelines stipulate that Nigeria should have "multi-purpose single-tier institutions called local government with complete and self-contained budgets, so that the whole system of local government within any area can be identified, costed and co-ordinated" (1976,p.3). Where appropriate, however, the local authorities could have subordinate units to which they could delegate some of their powers and functions. It was hoped that such subordinate

units would further enhance representation and participation. In order to 'efficiently' perform its duties and still remain 'local', the Government directed that each local government area should have populations of between 150,000 and 300,000, with possible extension to 400,000 for large councils and even higher figures (800,000) where a single urban area is concerned. Permission had to be taken from the Federal Government before any state could create an authority of less than 150,000 population.

TABLE 7.3: POPULATION VARIATION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS IN SOME STATES

(IN THOUSANDS), 1976.

| State   | Over 400 | 350-400 | 300-350 | 250-300 | 200-250 | 150-200 | Below 150 | Total | Highest                        | Lowest                        |
|---------|----------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|-----------|-------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Anambra | -        | 1       | 4       | 4       | 6       | 7       | 1         | 23    | Onitsha<br>(352,807)           | Oji River<br>(86,768)         |
| Benue   | -        | 1       | 4       | 3       | 1       | 3       | 1         | 13    | Ankpa<br>(370,717)             | Oguma<br>(89,560)             |
| Gongola | -        | 1       | -       | 5       | 2       | 7       | 2         | 17    | Michika<br>(375,596)           | Zing<br>(126,091)             |
| Ogun    | -        | -       | 2       | 1       | 2       | 5       | -         | 10    | Abeokuta<br>(324,814)          | Ijebu North<br>(162,367)      |
| Rivers  | -        | 1       | 1       | 2       | 3       | 1       | 1         | 9     | Degema<br>(369,082)            | Sagbama<br>(144,451)          |
| Kano    | 10       | 3       | 3       | 4       | -       | -       | -         | 20    | Kano Metropolitan<br>(711,354) | Jahun<br>(261,654)            |
| Sokoto  | 7        | 2       | 1       | 5       | 2       | 2       | -         | 19    | Gusau<br>(563,000)             | Yauri<br>(163,000)            |
| Ondo    | -        | 1       | 2       | 3       | 4       | 6       | 1         | 17    | Ekiti<br>Central<br>(361,634)  | Ilase/Ese<br>Odo<br>(126,455) |
| Kwara   | 1        | -       | -       | 1       | 2       | 7       | 1         | 12    | Ilorin<br>(474,385)            | Kogi<br>(124,000)             |

SOURCES : Compiled from Statistical Digests of some states, and from 'Progress Reports' sent in by some states to the National Conference on Local Government Reform, University of Ife, 1977.

A brief look at Table 7.3 shows the extent to which local authorities in 9 states (chosen randomly) were created in accordance with the Federal Government's guidelines. Of the 140 authorities in the nine states, 133 have populations within the range stipulated by the Government. In other words, only 7 of the 140 local authorities (5%) are outside the guide-

lines, and for which special permission had to be sought for their creation before they started to function. By April 1977, a total of 299 local authorities were fully operational in Nigeria.

It is interesting to compare Tables 7.1 and 7.3. As in Britain, there are considerable variations in sizes of local authorities in Nigeria although these are far less bizarre than before the 1976 reform (compare Tables 5.3 and 7.3). Unlike in Britain where each metropolitan county exceeds the one million population mark, in Nigeria there is no local authority with more than the upper limit of 800,000 people. Just as one can point to the disparity in population of two English metropolitan districts, Birmingham (1,168,000) and South Tyneside (182,000) so also one can point to the disparity between Kano Metropolitan Authority (711,354) and Oguma Local Government (89,560). There are diversities as well in areas and revenues (Table 7.4) but again much less than before the reform in 1976 (see chapter 5).

TABLE 7.4: REVENUE RANGES OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS IN SOME STATES, 1977-8 (IN NAIRA)

| State  | Highest                        | Lowest                       |
|--------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Sokoto | Sokoto L.G. (4,412,372)        | Anka L.G. (1,782,778)        |
| Ogun   | Abeokuta L.G. (2,857,720)      | Ijebu North L.G. (1,690,773) |
| Kano   | Kano Metropolitan (12,522,940) | Kazaure L.G. (1,794,320)     |
| Imo    | Aba L.G. (7,782,670)           | Bende L.G. (3,027,139)       |
| Bauchi | Akko L.G. (2,937,404)          | Dass L.G. ( 796,928)         |

SOURCES : Compiled from Statistical Digests of some states, and 'Progress Reports' delivered at the National Conference on Local Government Reform, University of Ife, 1977.

The degree of change involved varied from state to state. Its practical effect was most felt in the northern states where large emirates had to be broken up into a number of local authorities. In Kano State, for example, the former Kano Emirate was divided into 16 new local authorities. Subordinate authorities were also established so as to bring



the electorate nearer the government (see Table 7.5). Nineteen local authorities replaced the former five in Sokoto State, and in Bornu State, the former Bornu Local Authority was broken up into eleven new local governments. There were formidable changes in the structure of local government in other parts of the federation but attempts were made not to disturb loyalties of the people to their local authorities. There were adjustments to existing boundaries, for example, in Bendel State where the fourteen Divisional Development Councils became nineteen local governments. Kwara State now has twelve local authorities instead of the former eight, with changes only in Igbera Division which is now divided into Okehi and Okene Local Governments; Ilorin Division which was divided into three new local authorities (Asa, Ilorin and Moro); and Igbomina/Ekiti Division which becomes two local governments, Ifelodun and Irepodun. Eight new local authorities now replace the former seven in Niger State. Lagos State created eight new local governments out of the former seven local councils. The existing Lagos City Council was divided into two - Lagos Island Local Government and Lagos Mainland Local Government. Slight boundary changes were made at Ikorodu, Ikeja and Epe local authorities; Mushin Town Council was divided into Mushin West and Mushin East Local Governments; and Awori Ajeromi and Egun Awori District Councils were amalgamated to form Badagry Local Government. Thus every local government has an identifiable governmental character. As a third-tier of government, it has elected officers who are expected to be responsible to the electing citizens.

In Britain corruption and maladministration is to be checked by the ombudsman. The Local Government Act 1974 established two commissions for local administration, one for England and the other for Wales, each embodying parliamentary and local commissioners. The commissions make the necessary administrative arrangements including appointing staff, providing accommodation and publishing information about the procedure

TABLE 7.5: KANO STATE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA

| Local Government          | Subordinate Units or Districts                         | Headquarters           | Population |
|---------------------------|--|------------------------|------------|
| <u>A KANO EMIRATE</u>     |  |                        |            |
| 1. Kano Metropolitan      | City, Waje, some part of Ungogo and Kumbotso           | Kano City and Township | 711,354    |
| 2. Dambatta               | Dambatta and Babura                                    | Dambatta               | 384,167    |
| 3. Ringim                 | Ringim and Garki                                       | Ringim                 | 428,635    |
| 4. Minjibir               | Minjibir and Ungogo                                    | Minjibir               | 286,384    |
| 5. Gezawa                 | Gezawa and Gabasawa                                    | Gezawa                 | 321,234    |
| 6. Bichi                  | Bichi  | Bichi                  | 432,770    |
| 7. Dawakin Tofa           | Dawakin Tofa   | Dawakin Tofa           | 471,874    |
| 8. Gwarzo                 | Gwarzo and Karaye                                      | Gwarzo                 | 614,508    |
| 9. Tudun Wada             | Tudun Wada and Kiru                                    | Tudun Wada             | 343,408    |
| 10. Rano                  | Rano and Kura  | Rano                   | 564,438    |
| 11. Wudil                 | Wudil and Sumaila                                      | Wudil                  | 537,754    |
| 12. Dawakin Kudu          | Dawakin Kudu and Kumbotso                              | Dawakin Kudu           | 408,176    |
| 13. Dutse                 | Dutse  | Dutse                  | 319,521    |
| 14. Jahun                 | Jahun  | Jahun                  | 261,654    |
| 15. Birnin Kudu           | Birnin Kudu and Gwaram                                 | Birnin Kudu            | 430,708    |
| 16. Gaya                  | Gaya   | Gaya                   | 382,541    |
| <u>B. HADEIJA EMIRATE</u> |  |                        |            |
| 17. Hadeija               | Hadeija, Birnin Guri, Hirikasama, and Madori           | Hadeija                | 486,328    |
| 18. Kaffin Hausa          | Kaugama, Auyo, Kaffin Hausa, and Bulangu               | Kaffin Hausa           | 281,942    |
| <u>C. GUMEL EMIRATE</u>   |  |                        |            |
| 19. Gumel                 | Gumel, Damzomo, Gagarawa, Sule Tankarkar and Maigatari | Gumel                  | 366,588    |
| <u>D. KAZAURE EMIRATE</u> |  |                        |            |
| 20. Kazaure               | Kazaure, Roni, Yan Kwashi and Amayawa                  | Kazaure                | 293,754    |

SOURCE : Kano State Statistical Digest, Ministry of Economic Development, Kano, Nigeria, 1976-77.

for making complaints. The commissioners investigate the complaints. The office of the ombudsman is absent in Nigerian local government but the Guidelines made provisions for public scrutiny of the accounts and records of proceedings of the council.

#### Urban Areas

Communities may be considered large either by population, and/or by territory. Where both the population and territory are large the main problem will be that of dividing the community into units. There are two options : (a) constitution of large urban centres into separate local government units and the rest into one or more local government areas; and (b) merging some areas with the main town and constitution of the rest into one or more local government units.

The Guidelines provide that urban centres with populations of more than 150,000 could be constituted into separate local government areas. In fact it stipulates that no town or city should be split between two primary local governments; and that "the special requirements of towns within local government areas can best be catered for by subordinate Town or Ward Councils" (1976, p.4).

Thus the 1976 reform tried to solve the existing structural problems of local government by supplying a full description of local government with the following attributes: the first criterion is that of autonomy. The new local government unit is established by law "to exercise specific powers within defined areas" and they have their "own identity, powers, and sources of revenue ... and functions for which they are responsible to the State" (Guidelines, 1976, p.3). Some of these powers and functions are exclusive to local governments while others are held concurrently with State Governments (see Appendix I). In other words, as creatures of the state, the new local governments are subject to state control in the concurrent list. This control notwithstanding, local authorities have a substantial degree of autonomy - in functions,

administrative and fiscal affairs (see, however, Chapter 8). The second attribute is that a local authority now exists as a corporate entity - with a given area and population.

#### FUNCTIONS OF NEW LOCAL AUTHORITIES

Local authorities are statutory corporations created by State Edicts or by Act of Parliament in Britain and limited in their activities to the powers and duties prescribed in the legislation. If they act unlawfully, the actions will be ultra vires and the courts can prevent this. Local authority functions in both countries are of two main categories : those which they have a duty to perform (mandatory functions); and those which they can perform at their discretion (permissive functions). The majority of functions are compulsory - as, for instance, refuse disposal and the provision of public conveniences. On the other hand the provision of local entertainments or libraries is a service which many local authorities are empowered to provide if they believe it necessary, but there is no compulsion and it ranks as a permissive function. A number of functions such as the provision of public health and education are mandatory in Britain whereas they are permissive in Nigeria (See Appendix I). The reasons for allowing such functions to be permissive in Nigeria are due to the weak financial position of local authorities and lack of adequately qualified personnel.

Local authorities may also acquire additional powers, giving some measure of flexibility and enabling enterprising authorities to do pioneering work. Furthermore, authorities' functions vary over time, either by the allocation of new activities, such as consumer protection services, or by the transfer of functions to other bodies, such as water supply to the new water authorities or corporations.

Since the system of local government in Nigeria is unitary, there is no division of functions between levels of authorities. In England and

Wales, all local authority services in any area can be provided by one or both of the principal councils, namely a metropolitan county and/or metropolitan district, a non-metropolitan county and/or non-metropolitan district, or the Greater London Council and/or a London borough. In some cases concurrent powers are exercised whereby some aspects of a service are provided at one level and other aspects at another, planning being one example. District councils can also in some instances undertake duties on behalf of county councils on an agency basis. The underlying philosophy behind the division of local authority functions is to allocate to the counties those functions which need substantial resources and/or can be most effectively administered over large areas, such as strategic planning, major highways and police. At district council level, functions are allocated which are best provided in smaller units and where local knowledge and control are important, as with housing and local amenities.

It is easier to understand the range and scope of local authority services if they are grouped in a meaningful way. Richards (1978, pp.63-8) has classified them into four groups :

- (a) PROTECTIVE - protecting the individual from various dangers, through fire brigades, police forces, main drainage, refuse removal, food inspectors, weight and measures inspectors and the licensing of public premises;
- (b) COMMUNUAL - for the benefit of all, such as the provision of roads and paths, street-lighting, planning and leisure services;
- (c) PERSONAL - giving direct assistance to individuals, such as education and welfare services; this is now the most costly part of local authority services in both countries;
- (d) TRADING - these have diminished with the nationalisation of gas and electricity undertakings and the transfer of water supply to the regional water authorities in 1974 in Britain. In Nigeria, water supply has been taken over by the water corporation of each state; Kwara State allocated

8.2 million naira in 1976 for the development of thirteen modern markets, a service that falls within the jurisdiction of local government. Many of the functions which one would term as trading are already in the hands of special purpose bodies (see chapter 8). Nevertheless, there are some trading services remaining, such as civic restaurants, public transport facilities and airports (see Appendix I for details of allocation of functions).

#### FINANCE

Without an adequate and expanding financial base, local governments, no matter how enthusiastic and hardworking they may be, will not be in a position to deliver local services to the people at an acceptable level and at the right time. The bane of pre-1976 reform efforts of local government was finance. One major disadvantage from which most of the grants in Nigeria suffered was that they were paid in arrears and hence much depended on the ability of the local authorities concerned to finance their projects from their own limited resources before collecting grants from the Regional/State Governments.

The strength of the 1976 reform was its financial provision. As a first step, the Federal Government wrote off all the debts of the local authorities so as to give them a clean start. The Guidelines state that "if meaningful local government is to be expected in Nigeria, much larger financial resources are needed. In respect of local resources the only one which can be made to yield really large sums is Property Rating the use of which should be extended to all local governments ..." (1976, p.13). Following the recommendations of the committee appointed by the Federal Government (Report of the Committee on the Federal and State Governments' Financial Contributions to Local Governments, 1977, mimeo) it was decided that the Federal Government should allocate 5 per cent of its retained revenue to all the local governments in the country while each state government would allocate 10 per cent of its total

recurrent revenue to the Government's contribution, distributed to each state according to population and 25 per cent on the basis of equity among the states. The allocations from both Federal and State Government sources to the local authorities in each state are paid into the State Local Government Fund from which they are distributed to each local government - the formula being 75 per cent according to population and 25 per cent on the basis of equity. Thus the Federal Government allocated N100 million to State Governments for onward transmission to local authorities in 1976/77. This was increased to N250 million in 1977/78 but reduced to N150 million in 1978/79. Again this was doubled to N300 million in 1979/80.

The 1976 reform has therefore introduced a new formula of revenue-sharing which is comparable to the Brazilian, Dutch and United States systems. The effect of the reformed system of finance on local government in Nigeria can be seen in Table 7.6. Before 1976, state government grants ranged between 3 per cent and 10 per cent of the total local government revenue (except in Kwara State with 22 per cent in 1972/73), but the percentage has now gone up sharply to between 75 per cent and 85 per cent in 1977/78 on the average. At the same time in Britain, local authorities in England and Wales received 65 per cent of their expenditure from central government grants. This over-reliance on state grants is a grave development in Nigeria because it makes local authorities dependent on another level of government which has hardly proved reliable in the past.

On a comparative basis it seems as if local authorities in Nigeria are financially better than before the reform although they are still spending only about 10 per cent of all public expenditure as against the 30 per cent spent by their English and Welsh counterparts. The local government share of total public expenditure varies from state to state. In 1976, for example, local authorities in Kwara State spent as low as 3.6 per cent of total public spending while the figure was as high as 18.5 per cent in Lagos State and even higher (22 per cent) in Anambra State in 1979. As a proportion of total local government revenue, the grant

TABLE 7.6: REVENUE ALLOCATION/GRANTS TO LOCAL GOVERNMENTS IN SELECTED COUNTRIES (1970-77)

| 1<br>Country   | 2<br>National and State/Regional Assistance to Local Government and/or Local Government's share of National/State Collected Revenue 1975/77 | 3<br>Revenue derived from Column (2) as Percentage of Total Government Revenue |  | 5<br>Remarks                                   |
|----------------|---|--|--|--|
|                |   | 1975/77  | 1970 (where available)                               |  |
| Brazil         | 10% of National Revenue Shared (1975) 20% of State Sale Taxes   | 80%-90% small L.G.<br>50% large L.G.   | N.A.   | 9.1% of National Revenue in 1970 went to L.G.  |
| Columbia       | 13% of National Revenue   | N.A.   | N.A.   | -  |
| Costa Rica     | 10% of National Revenue (1975)  | N.A.   | -  | 1.9% of National Revenue in 1970 went to L.G.  |
| Honduras       | 6.3% of National Revenue (1973)   | N.A.   | N.A.   | -  |
| United States  | State/Local Government sharing of taxes on motor spirits and tobacco, etc. Also Fed. grants in aid of L.G.                                  | Federal 7.15%;<br>State 31.15% (1973/<br>4) Fed. Grants (38.3%)                | Federal 4.0%<br>State 30.6% (1972/2)<br>Grants 34.6% | Grants as % of total L.G. Revenue 1967 (31.3%) |
| United Kingdom | Exchequer grant, Housing subsidies and grants to trading services   | 45% (1974)   | 40%  | -  |
| Netherlands    | 13.25% of the yield of the eleven major national taxes  | 90%  | N.A.   | -  |
| Nigeria        | 5% of Federal Government retained revenue and 10% of each State Government recurrent revenue  | 75%-85%  | 3%-10%   | -  |
| Denmark        | Grants and re-imbursements  | 54% (1973/74)  | 53% (1965)   | -  |

SOURCE : Orewa, 1977, mimeo.



figures of 3 per cent to 10 per cent for Nigeria in 1972/73 was far less than the United States percentage of 31.3 per cent (1967) and 40 per cent in the United Kingdom (1970). With the new system, however, the 5 per cent Federal and 10 per cent State Government allocations have raised the Nigerian grant as a proportion of total revenue to a ratio of about 80 per cent and placed it roughly on the same level with Brazil and second only to the Dutch ratio of almost 90 per cent. It has now outstripped the United State with 38.3 per cent in 1974 and England and Wales with 65 per cent in 1976.

The sound financial state of the local governments is evident in Kaduna State where the fourteen local authorities estimated to spend a total of N42,982,155 in 1977/78 on recurrent account while their estimated revenue amounted to N55,399,101, leaving an estimated surplus of N12,416,946. The Federal Government provided N17,091,345 of the estimated revenue, while the Kaduna State Government provided N11,491,875. This sound financial base is true of all local governments in Nigeria, with Bauchi State local authorities having a total aggregate surplus of N361,701 and Kano with a surplus of over N5 million (see Table 7.7).

Apart from these grants, local governments in Nigeria, like their British counterparts, are expected to fully develop local revenues such as rates, community and property tax. For example, the Kano State Local Government Edict No.5 of 1977 states that the revenue of local government shall consist of :

- (a) moneys derived from community tax and any rate imposed by the local government;
- (b) moneys payable to the local governments under the provisions of any other enactment;
- (c) moneys derived from licences, permits, dues, charges, or fees specified by any bye-laws or rules made by the local government;
- (d) revenue derived from any public utility corporation, or any service or undertaking belonging to or maintained by the local government;

TABLE 7.7: ESTIMATED REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCILS IN 1977/78, KANO STATE

| Name of Local Government | Estimated 1977/78 Total Revenue | Estimated 1977/78 Recurrent Expenditure | Estimated 1977/78 Capital Expenditure | Estimated 1977/78 Total Expenditure | Estimated Balance 31/3/78 |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Municipal             | 12,522,940                      | 6,805,470                               | 4,392,500                             | 11,197,970                          | 1,324,970                 |
| 2. Dutse                 | 2,655,970                       | 692,200                                 | 1,048,780                             | 1,740,980                           | 1,114,990                 |
| 3. Rano                  | 2,618,310                       | 832,820                                 | 1,685,000                             | 2,517,820                           | 100,490                   |
| 4. Wudil                 | 2,596,920                       | 1,266,330                               | 1,288,000                             | 2,554,330                           | 42,590                    |
| 5. B/Kudu                | 2,589,810                       | 913,940                                 | 1,185,000                             | 2,098,940                           | 490,870                   |
| 6. D/Tofa                | 2,596,360                       | 787,780                                 | 1,340,000                             | 2,352,780                           | 243,580                   |
| 7. Bichi                 | 2,402,780                       | 944,260                                 | 1,048,780                             | 2,112,760                           | 290,020                   |
| 8. Dambatta              | 2,382,640                       | 1,197,150                               | 779,150                               | 1,976,300                           | 406,340                   |
| 9. Ringim                | 2,357,290                       | 715,430                                 | 1,210,000                             | 2,183,770                           | 173,520                   |
| 10. Jahun                | 2,357,290                       | 715,430                                 | 1,210,000                             | 2,183,770                           | 175,520                   |
| 11. Gwarzo               | 2,307,340                       | 931,730                                 | 1,177,000                             | 2,108,730                           | 198,610                   |
| 12. D/Kudu               | 2,292,960                       | 995,670                                 | 1,196,780                             | 2,192,450                           | 100,510                   |
| 13. Gaya                 | 2,213,890                       | 954,470                                 | 1,202,300                             | 2,156,770                           | 57,120                    |
| 14. Hadeija              | 2,198,000                       | 943,040                                 | 828,000                               | 1,771,040                           | 426,960                   |
| 15. Gumel                | 2,164,070                       | 1,025,140                               | 912,000                               | 1,937,140                           | 226,930                   |
| 16. T/Wada               | 2,154,150                       | 968,350                                 | 1,081,000                             | 2,049,350                           | 162,800                   |
| 17. Gezawa               | 2,099,610                       | 822,550                                 | 1,231,000                             | 2,055,550                           | 46,060                    |
| 18. Minjibir             | 2,075,650                       | 890,560                                 | 985,920                               | 985,920                             | 191,170                   |
| 19. K/Hausa              | 2,032,560                       | 812,510                                 | 1,090,000                             | 1,902,710                           | 129,850                   |
| 20. Kazaure              | 1,794,320                       | 610,220                                 | 1,116,700                             | 1,726,920                           | 67,200                    |
| TOTAL                    | 54,076,086                      | 16,265,465                              | 25,008,910                            | 50,702,560                          | 5,908,100                 |

SOURCE : 'Kano State Progress Report', National Conference on Local Government Reform, University of Ife, 1977.

- (e) rents derived from the letting or leasing of any building or land belonging to the local government;
- (f) statutory allocations;
- (g) any sums of money which may lawfully be assigned to the local government by any public corporation;
- (h) interest on the investments of the local government;
- (i) such sums of money as may be granted to the local government;
- (j) such sums of money as may be paid to the local government by a joint board; and
- (k) such other moneys as may lawfully be derived by the local government from any other source not hereinbefore specifically mentioned.

Like local authorities in England and Wales, those in Nigeria can take loans for capital development projects, and State Governments were directed to give 'revolving loan funds' to the local governments. One can conclusively say that the decision of the Federal Government on revenue sharing has provided a framework within which great strides forward can be made in the provision of a sound financial base for local authorities.

#### THE REFORM AND TRADITIONAL RULERS

We have pointed out the immense influence the traditional rulers, especially the Emirs in the north, wielded on local government in Nigeria (see chapters 2, 4 and 5). The Emirs had always resisted any attempts to have their power and influence curtailed. They wanted to have a say in the appointment of staff and the administration of local government. Furthermore, they were not prepared to accept any form of reform that would divide their usually large emirates into numerous local authorities. In fact, one can say that the failure of pre-1976 local government reform efforts was due mainly to the power struggle between elected councillors and the traditional rulers (see, Adamolekun, 1977, pp.30-42).

The 1976 reform has made a great attempt to reduce the inter-

ference of traditional rulers in the administration of local governments, without destroying their status in the society. The Head of State was aware of the importance of traditional rulers as agents of Government in public enlightenment (this was demonstrated in 1976 when the traditional rulers campaigned vigorously to get the citizens to register for the local government elections; the improved percentage of voters is shown in Table 7.8), as tax collectors, and as agents of law and order. Moreover, General Murtala realised that traditional rulers are effective agents of mass mobilisation, especially for socio-economic and political developments. In order to placate the traditional rulers, especially in the north where big emirates have had to be split into many local authorities, the Government states that :

Nothing in these reforms could be construed to mean an attempt at reducing or abolishing the traditional functions of our Emirs, Obas and Chiefs. On the contrary the reforms recognise the crucial nature of the position of the traditional authorities and care has been taken to preserve the organic unity of our traditional institutions and societies (Guidelines, 1976, foreword).

The traditional rulers on their part accepted the reform for a number of reasons. First, they had little or no choice in the face of a determined military government. Orders were orders and they were meant to be obeyed. Any form of opposition from the traditional rulers would have been summarily thwarted.

TABLE 7.8: REGISTERED ELECTORS FOR 1959 AND 1976 ELECTIONS

| STATES  | 1959 Election Registration |                         | 1976 Local Government Election Registration |                         |
|---------|----------------------------|-------------------------|---|-------------------------|
|         | No.                        | As % of 1952 Population | No.   | As % of 1976 Population |
| Bendel  | 650,130                    | 43.9                    | 1,595,839                                   | 47.04                   |
| Benue   | 327,266                    | 23.38                   | 1,245,778                                   | 37.23                   |
| Kwara   | 178,239                    | 33.28                   | 1,263,106                                   | 51.14                   |
| Ogun    | 421,453                    | 43.94                   | 974,239                                     | 45.56                   |
| Oyo     | 921,841                    | 37.77                   | 3,277,632                                   | 44.76                   |
| Ondo    | 497,247                    | 52.06                   | 2,968,195                                   | 78.88                   |
| Plateau | 276,197                    | 22.52                   | 863,337                                     | 30.90                   |
| Rivers  | 282,036                    | 45.78                   | 1,198,010                                   | 50.52                   |

The way the military regime dismissed some influential permanent secretaries and top military personnel proved the extent to which they were ready to go to achieve their policies. Therefore, the military government confronted the traditional rulers with a combination of threat and promise. They either accepted the apparent gains the reform promised them, or they would lose everything. Second, like everybody else in the country, the traditional rulers welcomed the new regime, as demonstrated by the historical visit made by top traditional rulers, such as the Sultan of Sokoto and the Oni of Ife, to Lagos to see General Murtala. Under the former regime, and especially after 1973, the powers and status of the traditional rulers were at their lowest ebb with some of them reportedly flogged on the order of some of Gowon's governors. The traditional rulers felt that the new regime would restore their powers and status. Third, for the first time since independence, the traditional rulers were taken into confidence in the reform effort. They were not just passive spectators or outsiders in the reform; they were really involved (see chapter 6). Fourth, the promise of the creation of 'traditional councils' allayed whatever fears they might have had that their powers and status would be eroded by the reform. Thus, although their emirates or areas of jurisdiction were divided into many local authorities, they still maintain their suzerainty over such former areas in religious and traditional matters (see their functions below).

The Guidelines state that Traditional or Emirate Councils should be presided over by an Emir or Paramount Chief. And the composition of the council should include all traditional title holders, one or two representatives of each local government council "if this is deemed appropriate and any other persons who may be desired to make the council broadly representative of the major facets of life in the area" (Guidelines, 1976, p.6).

The functions which the Government expects an Emirate or a Traditional Council to perform are :

- (a) To formulate general proposals as advice to local government;
- (b) to harmonize the activities of local government councils through discussion of problems affecting them generally, and giving advice and guidance to them;
- (c) co-ordination of development plans of local governments by joint discussion and advice;
- (d) community tax assessment within the area as a whole in consultation with local government councils, and announcement of tax. Also to aid, as is the usual practice, in the collection of tax;
- (e) determination of religious matters where appropriate;
- (f) support for Arts and Culture;
- (g) chieftaincy matters and control of traditional titles and offices, except where these are traditionally the exclusive prerogative of the Emir or Chief in which case the council's function shall be advisory to the Emir or Chief;
- (h) determination of customary law and practice on all matters including that relating to land;
- (i) making representations or expressing opinions to Government or any other organization on the collective behalf of the local governments in the area;
- (j) deliberating on or making representations or expressing opinions to Government or any other organization on any matters which it deems to be of importance to the Emirate or Chiefdom as a whole, or which may be referred to it by Government or other organisations; and
- (k) Emirs and Chiefs should be responsible, as hitherto, in assisting Government in the maintenance of peace(Guidelines, 1976,pp.7-8).

From the foregoing it has become clear that the influence of traditional rulers in local government will be mainly through their membership of the created emirate or traditional councils. It was recommended that each local government or group of local government councils should have

a traditional council consisting of traditional rulers and the chairman/ chairmen of the local government council(s) in the area. In order to function effectively and efficiently, the traditional councils were given permission to have their own staff as well as grants from the state and local governments. For instance, Bornu State created five Emirate Councils - Bornu, Dikwa, Fika, Biu and Bade - and a Traditional Council, Gwoza. For the 1977/78 financial year, a total provision of N1,051,000 was made to these councils, distributed as follows :

|         |          |         |          |
|---------|----------|---------|----------|
| Bornu : | N335,000 | Biu ;   | N154,000 |
| Dikwa : | N181,000 | Bade :  | N112,000 |
| Fika :  | N178,000 | Gwoza : | N 91,000 |

The State Government contributed 50 per cent of each amount shown above and the local authorities concerned contributed the remaining 50 per cent.

#### MEMBERSHIP OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCILS

In chapter 6 we discussed personnel management and we will deal here with the elected members of local authorities. The primary functions of all councillors ought desirably to be the direction and control of council affairs, making key decisions, monitoring progress and the broad supervision of officers and their work to ensure that agreed policy is implemented, that ratepayers secure value for money and that there is an absence of waste or graft. It is the duty of councillors to investigate complaints lodged by members of the public and to elicit the facts.

In order to guarantee that their objectives of the reform are adhered to, especially those of efficiency and democracy, the Nigerian Government recommended that membership of local government councils should be predominantly elected either by direct or indirect elections from local communities. But up to 25 per cent of the membership of each council could be reserved for members nominated by the state governor which, it was argued, would ensure the representation of a wide range of groups

(Guidelines 1976, p.8). This arrangement, however, is quite a departure from representative democracy because it makes the council less sensitive to a change in local opinion than a wholly elected body might be (see chapter 8). The life of a council is expected to be about three years unless previously dissolved by the state governor after due enquiry, for incompetence or incapability. The elections were not to be fought under party affiliations because the ban on partisan politics was still in force during the first elections in 1976/77.

The Guidelines and the Edicts made provisions for the position of a chairman. Thus, each local council is to have a chairman who is elected for three years like the councillors. The council elects three candidates from its own membership listed in order of preference and the state governor "appoints one of the three persons proposed as chairmen to be chairman of the council or, where two or three persons are proposed, nominates any one of them to be chairman of the council" (Kaduna State, 1977, pp.11-12; Kwara State, 1976A, p.54; Rivers State, 1976, p.54).

For election purposes, each local government area was divided into single-member constituencies and each constituency elected one member by select ballot. Ogun State was divided into 134 constituencies, Kwara State 214, Gongola State 293 and Rivers State 189 constituencies. Table 7.9 gives in details the allocation of seats for every local government in Kwara State.

TABLE 7.9: ALLOCATION OF CONSTITUENCIES PER LOCAL GOVERNMENT: THE 1976 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS IN KWARA STATE

| Local Government Area | Population | Registered Voters | No. of Constituencies |
|-----------------------|------------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| Asa                   | 164,157    | 80,622            | 17                    |
| Borgu                 | 147,487    | 59,020            | 15                    |
| Edu                   | 152,758    | 78,803            | 16                    |
| Ifelodun              | 178,214    | 110,013           | 18                    |
| Ilorin                | 474,385    | 203,029           | 27                    |
| Irepodun              | 212,215    | 129,657           | 18                    |
| Kogi                  | 124,000    | 63,892            | 12                    |
| Moro                  | 162,647    | 79,571            | 17                    |
| Okehi                 | 250,899    | 134,484           | 20                    |
| Okene                 | 197,511    | 112,451           | 18                    |
| Oyi                   | 248,181    | 138,271           | 20                    |
| Oyun                  | 157,272    | 73,293            | 16                    |
| TOTAL                 | 2,469,727  | 1,263,106         | 214                   |

SOURCE: Kwara State, 1977, pp.3, 5 and 79.



The edicts enacted by the states, like the local Government Act 1972 in Britain, prescribed procedural arrangements for meetings, notice required, number of members to constitute a quorum, method of voting and like matters. Decisions on ordinary business must be made by a majority (2/3 majority in Nigeria) of the members present. Minutes of meetings must be available for inspection by local government electors. In Britain, the press and other members of the public can attend council and committee meetings.

#### COMMITTEES

The committee system which Nigeria adopted from her former colonial master is a characteristic feature of English local government, whereby the work of the local authority is sub-divided between groups of councillors, sometimes supported by co-opted persons, and smaller in size than the whole council. Prior to the reforms in 1974 and 1976 in Britain and Nigeria respectively, most local authorities were structured on the basis of departments operating under the direction and control of committees, which prepared budgets and thus became competitors for their share of the total available resources. The larger authorities provide a wide range of services which are interrelated and hence no one service should be treated in isolation.

The Bains Report placed great emphasis on the corporate approach to management in local government, believing that the traditional departmental procedure was no longer appropriate to secure the most effective use of resources. Hence the study group recommended that management activities be concentrated in a policy and resources committee supported by a chief executive and a management team of officers. In this way an authority can formulate more realistically its long-term objectives covering all services, and make forward planning projections, decisions as to priorities and assessment of financial implications. The basic philosophy is that at policy stage councillors decide and officers advise, while at the ensuring execution stage councillors monitor and officers perform. This represents an

over-simplification, as policy and administration cannot always be clearly distinguished and the boundaries can become blurred. The administration of policy frequently concerns the councillor more significantly than the policy itself since the worries of electors stem from policy implementation.

As we said in chapter 5, a tremendous similarity exists between Nigeria and Britain with respect to the whole language of discourse about local government reform. Little wonder then that the Guidelines, like the Local Government Act 1972, gave local authorities a discretionary power to set up committees, joint committees and sub-committees to enable them to discharge their functions. The Act and the Guidelines gave local authorities greater freedom in the organization of their internal structures, and they have streamlined their committee systems and reduced the number of committees.

Committees can be classified as follows :

(a) STATUTORY AND PERMISSIVE : Statutory committees are those which local authorities are by statute compelled to set up, namely the education committee of a local education and the police committee of a local government authority. In England and Wales they must also have a social services committee of a social services authority while local authorities in Nigeria must have a finance and general purposes committee. The Finance and General Purposes Committee is to be responsible for (i) the regulation and control of the finances of the local government; (ii) the consideration and award of contracts; (iii) the implementation of the decisions of the local government with which no other committee or body is charged and for the general running of the affairs of the local government; and (iv) such other functions as the local government may, from time to time, delegate thereto (except the power of levying a rate or tax or of borrowing money) (Kwara State, 1976A, p.59; Kano State, 1977, p.51).

Permissive committees are those which a local authority is not compelled to establish but can do so if it wishes. The edicts state that

"a local government may appoint such other standing or ad hoc committees in addition to those specified above for any general or special purpose that in the opinion of the local government would be better regulated and managed by means of a committee and may delegate to a committee so appointed, with or without restrictions or conditions, any function exercisable by the local government" (Kwara State, 1976A, pp.59-60: Rivers State, 1976, p.65);

(b) **STANDING AND SPECIAL** : Standing committees are set up on a relatively permanent basis and are normally renewed annually. Special committees are set up to deal with specific short-term matters, such as extensions to council offices or a review of house-improvement policy, and are disbanded when the objective has been realised;

(c) **SERVICE AND MACHINERY** : Service committees administer services or functions of a local authority, such as leisure services or highways. Machinery or co-ordinative committees are concerned with administrative machinery such as personnel;

(d) **JOINT COMMITTEES** can be appointed by two or more local authorities to deal with matters of common interest. This arrangement offers considerable flexibility and is ideally suited to the management of such facilities as sports centres, or control of water and atmospheric pollution; and

(e) **JOINT BOARDS** consist of the nominees of two or more authorities and they administer a service in which the appointing authorities have a mutual interest. They differ from joint committees in that they are separate from and independent of their constituent authorities, and are almost invariably bodies corporate with a perpetual existence and their own financial powers (see, Kano State, 1977, pp.54-55). Typical example would be joint planning boards set up by the appropriate ministers, or in the case of Nigeria, state commissioners.

Thus every local government in Nigeria was to have a chairman and not more than four supervisory councillors who will devote most of their

time and energies to the affairs of local government. These supervisory councillors will also exercise 'political control' over the Departments of their local government. They will each chair a committee "concerned with the political direction of a group of departments or of a single department such as in the case of education ... and (they) will automatically be members of the Finance and General Purposes Committees which will in effect be the 'cabinet' of the local government" (Guidelines, 1976, p.9).

The committee system, despite its alleged disadvantages (see Jackson, 1970, pp.138-142), therefore enables local authorities to deal with their work effectively and efficiently. The wide range of functions and variety of detailed matters requiring decisions by the principal authorities could not be handled at full council level without massive delegation to paid officers, which would destroy the democratic principle and result in councils being no more than rubber-stamps. Committees comprise a council's workshops, where officers' technical knowledge and councillors' assessment of public needs are integrated and a balanced solution formulated.

#### THE ROLE OF 'HOMO POLITICUS'

As we said in chapter 3, an adequate analysis of reorganization cannot be fully explained as only necessary response to the socio-economic and political changes in Nigeria and Britain. Equally important are the actions which reformers have to take to effect structural changes, and these actions are determined by their perception of environmental changes as well as their environment. Since the reforms in both countries were carried out by the decision-makers, their personality and interests must then come to bear on initiating and implementing reform. Their perception or interest may be fashioned by their party political ideology or by expediency or as was the case in Nigeria, by the need to redeem the image of the military in the eyes of the people.

The initiation and execution of local government reform under the Murtala/Obasanjo regime (Obasanjo took over as Head of State when Murtala was assassinated in 1976) was successful because their regime was so strongly committed to it. As we said earlier on, Nigeria was at its lowest ebb by 1975. It was therefore necessary from the beginning for the Murtala/Obasanjo regime to present a radical alternative to its corrupt, inefficient and 'direction-less' predecessors. Moreover, there was a threat of public disorder as exemplified by violent riots, high rate of armed robbery and disparaging articles in the press about the role of the army in politics. Gowon's policies became unpopular, especially when he back-pedalled on his initial decision to return the country to democratic rule by 1976. Furthermore, some elements in the army were known to be getting restive. Finally, the nation wanted a change. The new government therefore started by dismissing all known corrupt and inefficient civil servants and top military officers. The former state governors were dismissed and a series of inquiries instigated into their corrupt practices. The structure of the Military Government was modified so that the new state governors were no longer members of the Supreme Military Council but were responsible directly to the Supreme Headquarters. Thus it was impossible for these new state governors to operate state governments as their personal fiefdoms. The regime followed these reorganisations up by creating seven new states to bring the number to nineteen, and as a first sign of their willingness to restore democracy to the country in 1979, reformed the local government system. The creation of seven more states and the reorganization of local government brought the government nearer to the people than ever before. Murtala was a dedicated, dynamic and charismatic leader who loved democracy and he received mass reverence because the people knew he was acting in their interest. The support his regime gave to the reform effort led to its successful implementation.

In Britain, the role of 'homo politicus' in the reform can be illustrated by the actions of Richard Crossman (the initiator) and Peter

Walker (the executor). When Crossman was Minister of Housing and Local Government he had to decide the fate of the proposals for local government boundaries being made to him by the Local Government Commission.

He reported in his diary :

I soon discovered that as a Labour politician these are for me not merely decisions about the boundaries of local authorities but decisions which will influence the boundaries of constituencies ... every time ... I alter a county borough boundary I may affect the fate of the M.P. sitting for this borough ... Politically all I have to do is prevent 30 or 40 Labour seats going to the Tories (Crossman, 1975, pp.64-5,132).

The general problem which Crossman faced was simple : "how I can best adjudicate to avoid bringing Conservative suburbs into Labour cities like Leicester and Nottingham and so undermining safe Labour Parliamentary seats" and giving a built in majority to the Conservatives on the new local councils. Naturally enough, Crossman did not broadcast the fact that when taking boundary decisions he took "the greatest care to see that politically they were acceptable to the Labour group(s) on the town council(s) and to the Labour member(s)" (Crossman, 1975, pp.75-6, 160, 240, 312).

Another example and in a similar vein, is that of Henry Brooke who was leader of the Conservative opposition on the LCC and as Minister of Housing and Local Government "he was anxious to see the Herbert Commission's proposals adopted primarily for the political advantage that he saw in them of putting an end to Labour's control of London" (Rhodes, 1970, p.108).

The action of 'homo politicus' was also conspicuous at the implementation stage of the 1974 reform. For instance, Mr. Walker, a devout Tory, was vigorously opposed to a unitary system which he saw as a radical departure from the status quo. He attached great importance to the evolution of a new structure through building on the existing multi-tier system rather than through radically changing areas and authorities. Furthermore, he surely had the political gain to be made by the Conservative Party in mind when he merged county boroughs, normally Labour, into counties normally Conservative. Southport, a town council under Conser-

vative control, got some concessions during the implementation of the reform. Southport is interesting because its inclusion in, and Ellesmere Port's exclusion from, Merseyside made Conservative control of that new metropolitan county a very real possibility in an election year favourable to the party. Even in more general terms, party bias is discernible for Mr. Walker was resurrecting, albeit in an attenuated form, a very long-standing Conservative desire to neutralise the radical propensities of the cities by placing them under the umbrella of the Conservative-voting shires (Sharpe, 1978, p.84). Certainly these are just some of the examples where one can say that the political interests of the reformers have over-riden the declared objectives (democracy and efficiency) of the reform.

#### CONCLUSION

The Murtala/Obasanjo regime realised that to achieve national development and national stability, a firm foundation for a rational government at the local level is imperative. They implemented all their reform programmes and even went further to ensure that local government is enshrined in the constitution as an autonomous third level of Government. They realised that not only on the institutional level, but, more important, on that of the general climate, the development, stabilization and extension of local government contribute towards the democratization of customs, to the education of the citizens and to preparing them in this way for an active participation in public life.

The reform in Britain was gerrymandered to suit the Conservative Party rather than the public. This is hardly surprising because, as Sharpe says, "new boundaries mean a new basis for determining majorities and therefore which party will win. No party in power dares miss the opportunity to ensure that whatever the ostensible reasons for boundary change may be, its interests are not only protected but if possible enhanced" (1978, p.84). However, the mere fact that the reforms were

carried through by the Conservative Party is a great achievement. But as we shall see in chapter 8, an adequate evaluation of the reform can not be undertaken on the basis of the role of party politics, though insofar as the pursuit of party advantage undermined the necessary relationship between diagnosis and remedy, it was likely to be one major contribution to the ultimate failure of the reform.

The process of local government reform is such a complex thing that it can never be devoid of problems. It is therefore necessary to evaluate the reform. Did the reformers stick to the reform objectives? Do the end products of the reforms contribute to the stated goals such as democracy, efficiency, national stability and economic development? These questions will be answered in the next chapter and we shall give our own recommendations (see chapter 9) as to how the problems that arise out of the reforms can be solved.



## CHAPTER EIGHT

EVALUATION

## INTRODUCTION

Now that the survey is completed I realise that I have shifted from seeking dramatic and speedy remedies for administrative failings to recognizing the many obstacles in the path of reformers (Caiden, 1970, p. xi)

This chapter will attempt a systematic evaluation of the reform process in both countries, paying particular attention to their implementation. The critiques we offer will enable us to put forward our own fresh approach in the next chapter.

## THE PURPOSE OF EVALUATION

We shall not devote all our energy to what critics have termed the 'popular mythology' (Dearlove, 1979, pp. 1-19) or 'traditional orthodoxy' (Stanyer, 1976, p. 17) of local administrative reform, that is, an optimistic reliance on prescriptive liberal theories of representative government to explain the practice of local government which inhibits the development of empirically based theories more carefully attuned to the reality, and not the ideology, of the local situation today. The almost universal 'popular mythology' of 'large is efficient whereas small is democratic' is pure assertion made without adequate research or evidence. Fairly obviously, it is also part of this orthodoxy to assert that small is inefficient whereas large is undemocratic, and there is the view that it is not really possible to attain both democracy and efficiency within the one local government system. Given the assessment of the system of local government in both countries as inefficient and the concern to ward off even more central control, there has been the consistent and untiring advocacy of the need for larger local authorities. But, at the same time, there has been a certain sneaking anxiety about the

implications of all this for the democracy of local government. It was widely believed in both countries that the calibre of councillors had declined. Another rule of reform relates to the issue of central control and local autonomy and derives from the orthodox explanation for the extent of central control. If you wish to decrease central control, and so increase the extent of local autonomy, then you should provide new sources of local revenue, so reducing local dependence upon the central government. This sequence is fairly familiar: "Commitment first, theory second; and facts last, or not at all." (Dearlove, 1979, p 38).

To question these 'traditional orthodoxies' would be to question the rationale of the objectives of the reforms and this would require a separate thesis. A critical consideration of the orthodoxies on local government and its reorganization is not the same as a critical consideration of the reality of reform itself, and demolishing the literature does not tell us much about the political implications of reform. Thus to toe the line of questioning the 'traditional orthodoxies' would be to concentrate on the theory of local government reform at the expense of good empirical studies of the implemented reforms, which is contrary to our intention. Instead we will be concentrating on evaluating the implemented reforms in Nigeria and Britain in terms of their reform objectives, or more specifically, in terms of the ordinary men and women whom the entire administrative apparatus is designed to serve. Undoubtedly this will also involve some evaluation of their reform objectives since we need "to adopt a less narrow perspective where we engage in questioning, research, and wider reading, and try to transcend the artificial specialization imposed by disciplinary boundaries" (Dearlove, 1979, p.10).

In fact, the job is only half done if we do not give some evaluation

of the objectives and the strategies of reorganization. After all the reformers might probably have seen only a part of the whole or they might have misunderstood the situation completely. Moreover, reformers often declare romantic objectives like democracy and efficiency to veil their undeclared intentions such as more power to the central government; reform may be an overt strategy designed to place the control of government in particular hands - a strategy that is seen as necessary and possible by certain groups at particular points in time when they feel that they are not winning, and cannot win, within the established rules of the governmental game. Short-term political victories can get converted into longer-term strategic gains if they can become institutionalized in new constitutions, structures and processes of government (see Chapter 7). The governmental power of various groups is partly a result of the rules that have been made to govern, as "some publics have been able to shape political institutions and practices ... This is ... a matter ... of the institutional framework of politics, and the very rules of the political game itself, being systematically biased in favour of certain interests rather than others" (Newton, 1976, p, 236).

Reform attempts in both countries since the Second World War conformed to an almost predictable pattern both as to the nature of the recommendations submitted and the results achieved. The insignificant progress being made as a result of these studies suggests that perhaps the proposals are not related sufficiently to programmes, are not imaginative enough to cope with modern complexities, and represent merely a futile exercise in trying to achieve a neat but sterile administrative structure.

Thus, in any evaluation of the results of a reform, it is not enough

to make our judgements merely on the basis of our 'expertise' in local administration and disregard the voice of the people. The people must consent to reform to make reform meaningful. The reformers must be reminded that the means are important only insofar as they help in the attainment of the ends. The mere fact that a reform is undertaken and completed is a major achievement but in most cases not as many changes are made as might be expected. The success of reform rests not merely on immediate accomplishments, but on the machinery it sets in motion for continuing attention to organizational improvements.

Although the reform in Britain is radical, it is definitely less radical than had been envisaged in 1966 when the Royal Commission was established, and it is much less radical than the reform in Nigeria. The Local Government Act 1972 is littered with decisions which would seem to conflict with the original theoretical objectives, for example, the unresolved structural-functional tangle relating to the complicated division of responsibility between counties and districts for services such as highways and town and country planning. Though such decisions could be defended, the case relied on an extremely narrow interpretation of the concepts of democracy and efficiency and it was apparent that political expediency was a more important factor. Indeed, it is sometimes difficult to see exactly where the Government did stand firm during the consultative and legislative processes. Exceptions to the 250,000 population size were allowed, the 'whole built-up area' concept of the metropolitan counties was breached, the 'clear-cut division of powers' disappeared, and there was little in the way of a move towards the promised 'stronger' local authorities. The combination of powerful local government vested interests and a Conservative Government pursuing a policy which attempted to build on the existing

organization of local authorities ensured that tradition was frequently considered the more important whenever and wherever it conflicted with change.

In Nigeria, there still is a discrepancy between bureaucratic values of formal organizations like local government and social norms of behaviour. There is a wide gap between the laws of the statute book and the actual behaviour of the officials. Yet we know that reform of structure, if not followed by changes in patterns of behaviour, is insignificant. Functions which should be the exclusive preserve of local authorities are still being eroded by state governments and the impunity with which many local authorities have been dissolved without due inquiry by a high court judge as stipulated by law shows that the reform is more theoretical than practical. In short, reorganization was taken on its own terms at the level of its public face and ideology as being solely about increasing democracy, efficiency, and effectiveness in the general effort to create better government in the public interest, without a corresponding change in social and political norms of behaviour of state government and local government officials.

Reform in both countries was therefore based on a mixture of theoretical, institutional and political objectives. The need for governmental leadership and action ensured that any concern for theory was frequently subordinated to tactical considerations. We showed in Chapter 5 that the objectives as enunciated by the Royal Commission and the Federal Government were not only open to different interpretations but they were also vague and elusive. The vagueness results from the elusive nature of the theoretical diagnosis of local government defects which were made. What did both governments mean, for instance, by their assertion that local government was undemocratic? It is in terms

of responsiveness or representation or participation or their dependence on central government grants ? Or is it, as it has been suggested, because of the intrusion of party politics into local government ? The calibre of councillors was said to have declined yet everybody knows that there is no objective way of measuring councillor calibre. Have the reforms rectified these defects ?

In the foregoing chapters, attention has been given to the overall objectives of decentralization policies and to some of the major environmental (historical, ecological, social, economic and political) conditions which influenced the structural and operational reform of local government. Since the problem of local government reform was considered in the light of these objectives and environmental factors, the consequences of some objectives often proved incompatible with those deducible from certain ecological conditions. This pertains to the overall structure of local government and administration as well as to size and boundaries of local authorities. In both countries, there was 'tension' between the desire of the governments to promote democratic decentralization, and political conditions which made such a policy undesirable or socio-economic conditions which are dysfunctional to the development of local representative institutions with discretionary powers. The desire for efficiency caused both governments to favour relatively large local units, but the geographic isolation of many communities made this difficult to realise. A merger of cities with neighbouring villages seemed desirable, again for reasons of efficiency, but this was avoided because of the risks involved in grouping sociologically and culturally heterogeneous populations. Furthermore, scale enlargement was a strong argument for providing services for large areas, but this was deemed detrimental to large-scale popular

participation in decision making which is preconditional to local democracy.

As we noted in Chapter 6, there were differences in the strategies applied by the two countries. This was not unexpected because of the historical, social, economic and political differences between them. Britain went about the reform through a Royal Commission while the Nigerian Government decided to carry out the reforms itself. These strategies, however, have their own advantages and disadvantages. The Commission served a valuable purpose in maintaining a reform momentum and in creating a new agenda for public debate. Commissions are agents of change and the success of the Redcliffe-Maud Commission lay in the attraction of its report to the Government (and in the hostile reactions which produced an alternative approach attractive to the Opposition). The Government was able to adopt a set of proposals as its own which, it could claim, had emerged from an impartial, expert inquiry. It could continuously quote this 'expert advice' as a defence to its proposals (Rhodes, 1975, pp.191-3). Also, the use of a Royal Commission enabled a lot of research to be carried out and it afforded the public the chance to air their views, thereby minimizing resistance to reform. Furthermore, the use of the Commission enabled adaptation of the local government structure to new needs and conditions, without disrupting the continuity of the operations of local institutions.

The Nigerian Government decided to go it alone because they did not want a commission over which they would have only limited influence. The time factor was very important to the Federal Government because they had to implement eight programmes within four years, and local government reform was just one of them. The political set-up and the political situation of the country did not warrant the use of a commission. Nigeria was under a military regime and like all military regimes, it

wanted quick and precise action; a complete restructuring of the local government system was necessary so that the Government could carry out its new political ideals of democracy and self-reliance. The governmental and administrative machinery needed thorough and drastic overhaul to turn it into an effective instrument for achieving development objectives.

Both approaches have their disadvantages. Difficulties can arise through delay while a commission sits - such delay can, on occasion, aggravate the issue or cause it to be interpreted rather differently (as happened in the case of local government in Britain in the post-1958 period when attitudes hardened and structural weaknesses became increasingly apparent). Stagnation can result from advice which may prove to be politically unacceptable. Governments can find themselves in the embarrassing position of seeking to avoid implementation without wishing to launch a frontal attack on the findings of a body of experts appointed by government. Finally, by appointing a commission the Government loses control of the timetable. Though deadlines are often set - two years in the case of the Redcliffe-Maud Commission - they are rarely met. A Government which sets up a commission during its first year or two of office can be fairly sure that the report will arrive shortly before a General Election is due, at a difficult time for implementation to be feasible should the issue be controversial. This, of course, was just what happened to the Redcliffe-Maud Report. On the other hand, the appointment of a commission at a later stage in the life of a Government frequently results in the publication of a report after the next election, when that Government may well be no longer in office. Thus the appointment of commissions can be regarded in most cases as "a recipe for delay"



(The Guardian, 31 October 1968).

The strategy adopted by the Nigerian Government did not give room for necessary research and consultations. Critics could therefore point to the fact that the Government's recommendations were pure guess-work not based on any empirical evidence. They could also accuse the Government of high-handedness since the implemented reforms were not based on a broad consensus of the people. A sensible reform cannot be dictatorially imposed with one stroke of the pen. It needs cooperation of all concerned. A hurried radical reform like Nigeria's is disruptive and could be harmful. Moreover, an entirely new system may not adapt well to its environment and consequently become little more than a blueprint. Finally, drastic reforms may cause strong resistance and even violent opposition.

It is difficult to give a general judgement about these two approaches. There may be cases in which drastic reform of the existing system offers the best solution for a new government (as in Nigeria's case), whether because of the environmental conditions or political expediency or for other urgent reasons. Even then, however, the government must realise the risks involved in introducing a new system overnight, and the likelihood that much of the old system will continue to function, since community power structures tend to be highly resistant to change. The 'Government by Commission' approach is likely to meet with greater success. Not only can more allowance be made for ecological conditions, but the government is able to test the opinions and reactions of the people and to change its policy in line with the general consensus of the people. The success of either approach depends to a great extent on the government's ability to rally support for its proposals or to force them down the throats of national and

local communities in spite of opposition.

Although our evaluation of the objectives are interrelated because the reform objectives themselves are greatly linked to one another, such as efficiency to democracy or efficiency to functions and size of local authorities, nevertheless we shall be evaluating them under the following headings: Function and Size, Democracy, and Efficiency.

#### FUNCTION AND SIZE

In Chapter 6, we mentioned that the need for a systematic approach to local government reform led both countries to search for a correlation between the functions of local government units and the size and area in which these can be most effectively exercised. In pursuance of this objective, the Royal Commission recommended a unitary system of local government which was rejected on the ground that a single local authority is bound to be the wrong size for the discharge of at least some of the functions of local government (Local Government in England: Government Proposals for Reorganization, 1971, para. 9). It is doubtful, however, whether the new two-tier system meets this criticism. There was no justification made for the allocation of services adopted by the 1972 Act in terms of functional efficiency. Rather, the selection of housing and planning as the chief activities of the district authorities was motivated mainly by the need to operate these services close to the people, a principle that was admitted to rest more upon the demands of democracy than upon any need to achieve 'efficiency' (Local Government in England: Government Proposals for Reorganization, 1971, para. 13). One is justified, in view of this insistence on democracy, therefore, to say that the new authorities are unsuitable to discharge their democratic

functions effectively.

Another problem about the Royal Commission's proposals is that the unitary authorities were too small for the effective performance of some of their functions such as education, development and transport planning. The new counties are bigger than those proposed by the commission, but with their average population of around 500,000, the criticisms of the Redcliffe-Maud authorities advanced by the White Paper still apply. We can assert, along with the Royal Commission, that it is almost impossible to determine the relationship between the efficient operation of a certain function and the maximum and minimum size of local units; we should note that, despite the claims of the White Paper, the size and organization of the new counties was arrived at more as a matter of administrative convenience, political needs and respect for tradition, than by any analysis of the type of authority necessary to administer any particular service.

In giving its reform proposals, the Royal Commission mounted a lot of research to look at the realities of modern life and likely developments in the future, in order to give some sort of social and economic coherence to the new areas. In particular, attention was paid to the growth and scale of commuting and even to the distance which individuals travel between their home and their shopping centre, it being suggested that a single local authority should ideally cover all these various aspects of an individual's daily life. It is ridiculous that such an analysis could be rejected in favour of building on the existing organization which the government itself had pronounced ineffective and antiquated. Furthermore, with the possible exception of the new county of Humberside, traditional boundaries have been followed, which further hampers the expansion and development of the conurbations beyond their traditional boundaries which they have over-flown. The 'whole built-up area' concept

of the metropolitan counties was abandoned. It is depressing to find that the lack of congruity between the local government boundaries and the actual pattern of life which characterized the existing system was not just reproduced but also exacerbated. To the Conservatives, winning elections is an inevitable counter-weight to the rational solution of the size and shape of local government units. They were anxious to preserve the historic counties and protect the wealthy suburbs and countryside from urban demands for housing space. Care was taken in delineating the boundary between Hampshire and Dorset in 1972 not to divide a safe Conservative seat, while the Conservative town of Newmarket might logically have been in Cambridgeshire but was retained in Suffolk to balance Labour strength. The population range for each type of county authority is still astounding (see Chapter 7). In short, many of the local authorities (especially the districts) are neither small enough nor do they relate well to the facts of social geography. Our line of argument is that if the Government wanted to achieve efficiency and democracy within the same structure of local government, it should have made the upper tiers of local government bigger than at present constituted so that they could perform the major services efficiently; while making the lower tier (the districts) much smaller than at present so that they could perform the minor personal social services and help to increase the participation of the citizens in local affairs (see Chapter 9).

One of the primary aims of the 1972 Act was to create a system that is sufficiently flexible to match function to area and to ensure that decisions are taken as locally as possible. It is difficult to claim that the new system is better in relation to this goal than the old. "The vast bulk of the country was covered by a two-tier system under the old order so that the function-to-area 'fit' argument was already as close to being met as the new" (Sharpe, 1978, p. 88). Where it was not - in the

county boroughs - the successor districts are either larger than the county boroughs they superseded, or they are the same size. Either way, there has been no increase in local decision making. Moreover, it must be remembered that under the new system some major functions that were entirely the responsibility of the county boroughs have been transferred to the much larger counties. In short, it is difficult to see how the objective of matching function to area and of ensuring that decisions are taken as locally as possible has been achieved.

Another aim of the Act requires that local government boundaries follow population settlement patterns. This objective is based on the assumption that the basic settlement form is now the service centre and its hinterland. The service centre may be defined as the continuously built-up area of a town and its hinterland as the surrounding ring of satellite communities. These communities are embedded in a semi-rural and rural environment but, it is argued, they owe their existence to their proximity to the service centre and its accessibility to them in terms of employment, shopping and a myriad of private and public services. Thus the hinterland is said to be just as much a part of the town as are the suburbs that form the rim of the town's continuously built-up core.

The basic settlement pattern, so this argument continues, is, then, no longer one of urban entities that are sharply differentiated in socio-economic terms from their rural surroundings, but a series of service centres and their hinterlands - spread cities - whose boundaries meet and overlap to cover most of the country and especially the central population core of England (where over two-thirds of the population live) that runs from Greater Manchester and Merseyside in the north-west to London and the south-east region. In these areas, which Sharpe termed 'the coffin', we may no longer talk of urban and rural but rather of different degrees or urban-ness.

Translated into local government boundaries, this aim of the 1972 Act implied the abolition of the old county boroughs, which, broadly speaking, did not usually embrace even the whole of the built-up areas of cities, and the creation of new authorities that embraced some approximation of the spread city.

The need to match the local government structure to this alleged reality rested on three grounds. First, the objective linkages of the town plus hinterland will have already generated a subjective community of interest among all the inhabitants of the spread city through the links of employment, shopping and social activities. Secondly, and more decisively, planning and the related functions of traffic management, highways and public transport can only be effectively and efficiently undertaken if their jurisdiction covers the whole of the spread city since in planning terms service centre and hinterland are interdependent. The extent of settlement in the hinterland, for example, can directly affect the prosperity of the service centre economy, and, equally, the level and pattern of public and private services in the service centre - employment opportunities, car parks, shopping facilities, traffic control, public transport, cultural and educational services - affects those in the hinterland. Thirdly, retaining the old county borough boundaries was inefficient and irrational. Put in the more formal terminology of public goods theory (see Foster et al, 1980), we may say that the public goods services it provided had effects - they confer benefits or exact costs - over a much wider area than the built-up core. The extent of each service's externalities varied, but they were all well beyond the boundaries of the county borough. Extending the boundary was therefore an improvement on the status quo in the sense that it would come closer to internalising these service externalities and thus making possible a sharing of the costs and the benefits of the public goods more

equitably among those affected.

How far does the new system fulfil these three interrelated aims ? In one sense it never could, simply because the three aims conflict to some extent with the first main objective which seeks to keep decisions as local as possible. It clearly fails in some of the metropolitan counties which do not even embrace the continuously built-up area. Elsewhere, too, the boundaries of the shire counties are only a very crude approximation to the actual influence areas of the cities they encapsulate. To some extent this is because the spread city model cannot be applied in many areas outside the 'coffin', simply because a distinctive rural society still persists there. Also, many influence areas overlap.

Furthermore, the claim that there were economies of scale to be reaped by reorganization could only be based on the assumption that local services generate certain fixed costs irrespective of the population size of the authority. If the average population served by local authorities was increased it followed that unit costs of the service would fall. The difficulty with this assumption is, first, that these fixed costs have never been identified. They have only been assumed to exist and we may presume that the faith in their existence is derived not so much from evidence of their existence as the pervasive influence of the economic theory of the firm. Secondly, the assumption seems to be that the long-run cost curve declines at the same point and for the same level of output for all services - education, social welfare, highways and so forth. Equally, too, they are assumed to operate over a very wide population range so that any enlargement of any existing authority would apparently reduce service costs. Finally, the belief in "the apparently limitless fixity of fixed costs was matched by an equally firm belief in the absence of diseconomies of scale" (Sharpe, 1978, p. 92). All of

these assumptions would be more plausible if there had been any evidence under the old system that they might be correct. But there was little or no evidence that scale did bring lower costs (Newton, 1974, p. 54).

To sum up the discussion of the functionalist goals, we may say that if the new system seems to fulfil them to a much greater extent than the other objectives which it was created to achieve, the functionalist objectives are based on a number of shaky assumptions. Not only are these objectives based on shaky assumptions, but they have been the prime determinants of what is perhaps the fundamental defect of the new system in Britain, and that is the enormous scale of the new authorities. Despite the claim of the 1972 White Paper that the new units would be created, 'above all else', on the basis that 'a genuine local democracy implies that decisions should be taken as locally as possible', the local units, the districts, are on average in excess of 120,000 population. In some of the remoter rural areas this means 'genuine local democracy' operates in areas of 40 miles across, and districts where the seat of government is 20 miles from quite large population centres within the district are quite common. At the county level, which provides most of the major functions, the situation is even more extraordinary. The average population of the English and Welsh counties is in excess of one million and in some instances the seat of government is a half-a-day's travel time from the largest centres of population within the county. In Devon, for example, the largest city - Plymouth - is 40 miles from the county seat at Exeter.

The reformers were very concerned with improving service performance, and it was the assumption that this improvement could be achieved by increased scale. This dominant emphasis on scale effects meant that the other major requirement of local government - that it should be democratic - is overwhelmed. The result is that the primary local authorities in the



new system (the counties and the metropolitan districts) are too large to correspond to anything that anyone can recognise as a community in the sense that they can command the loyalties of the citizens, evoke a sense of identity among them, or correspond to their patterns of movement. Not only is the democratic criterion overwhelmed, it is also undermined by the incorporation of functionalist criteria within it in the sense that making local government units functionally effective is also seen as making them more democratic. The reasoning behind this connection runs something like this: democracy implies the capacity of government to act. It therefore follows that enhancing the capacity of a local authority to act, making it more functionally effective that is, also enhances democracy (Wood, 1976, p. 24).

One of the defects found in the existing structure of local government was the rural-urban dichotomy. It was argued that a town which is a natural commercial, social and cultural centre for the surrounding hinterland should also be its administrative centre. In some cases the distinction between town and country has remained, at the second-tier level especially. Bath is a separate authority, an island wholly within another district; the same is true of Cambridge. Among third-tier authorities the difference in status between town and parish tends to emphasize the urban-rural dichotomy even more clearly than before the reform.

Furthermore, the separation of planning functions between county and district councils causes delays, duplication of resources and inter-authority disputes. Their satisfactory operation demands a high level of cooperation between the two different types of authority, which is not always achieved. The division of functions, such as the maintenance of minor roads and local planning powers (see Appendix 1), may be confusing to the average elector and the existence of two or even three

local authorities administering the same area does not give the impression of optimum effectiveness. One can also argue that the two-tier structure leads to fragmentation and loss of a corporate approach. Cooperation between counties and districts can be hindered by local loyalties, party political differences, and a natural tendency of district councils to strive for maximum independence. In theory, concurrent powers should provide excellent opportunities for cooperation but this is not always the case in practice, with one authority waiting for the other to provide the particular service and the result that nothing is provided.

Alternatively, both authorities may provide similar services in the same area causing unnecessary and expensive duplication.

The structural-functional defects of the present system are beautifully summed up by Norton:

It has certainly failed to achieve administrative areas in many cases in which urban centres and interdependent rural hinterlands can be treated as a unit ... the dispersal of local government functions among not only new counties and districts with strange and unfamiliar names and areas but also among new health and water authorities appear to have created a more difficult set of problems for the public. Accessibility is less and involvement is less. The interests of different groups of authorities remain antagonistic and have to be reconciled at the centre (1980, p. 273).

Most of these criticisms can also be levied on the Nigerian reform.

There was no research to back up the recommended population range of 150,000-800,000. In the event, many local authorities in the south are too small to be able to perform their functions effectively and efficiently, while those in the north are too large for the democratic participation envisaged by the reformers. Indeed, it would appear that the Federal Government paid more attention to administrative convenience in restructuring local government than to efficiency. Furthermore, given the large expanse of the area of the country (Nigeria is four times bigger than Britain), it would seem that the democratic objective cannot be realised by less than three hundred authorities. This necessitated some states, such as Anambra,

Kano and Rivers to create 'subordinate' authorities. Unfortunately these so-called 'subordinate' authorities have no powers, no finances, no personnel and no functions except those delegated to them by their 'parent' authorities. Surely if the Federal Government was sincere in its declaration that local authorities should exercise democratic self-government close to the local levels of the society and should perform functions in which success depends on community responsiveness and participation, it should have given real recognition to these second-tier authorities. Likewise, the Federal Government declared that a population of not less than 150,000 was the minimum necessary for local authorities to be functionally effective and efficient. Whatever criteria might have been used to arrive at this magic figure, there are problems. Firstly, the minimum size concept based on a cost-benefit relationship not only depends on the number of inhabitants, but also on population density, number of children per family, communications and such like. It is definitely difficult to determine an absolute local government area on a total population basis. Any attempt to ascertain a minimum level is therefore of limited use. Secondly, it remains to be seen how a local authority of 150,000 people can generate enough resources to maintain its 'functional integrity' and carry out its tasks at the level demanded by present-day society. Thirdly, the resulting low level of achievement is likely to induce and has induced state governments to exercise close control or even to transfer some functions from local government. Fourthly, the financial weakness of small local authorities causes frustration and the effect this has on representative local government can only be harmful. Finally, it would be difficult to recruit staff of sufficiently high calibre, particularly when set against the counter-attraction of state civil services. Thus, without an adequate revenue that would enable them to recruit qualified staff, it is difficult to see

how they can perform their duties, such as economic planning, housing and education, effectively.

Furthermore, and like in Britain, there is still a bewildering difference in the populations of local authorities (see Table 7.3 ). It is surprising that a local authority like Kazaure with a population of 293,754 and a revenue of N1,794,320 is expected to have the same powers and functions and perform them to the same standard as Kano with a population of 711,354 and a revenue of N12,522,940. Perhaps an even more serious criticism of the new system, with the possible exception of northern Nigeria, is the great emphasis that was placed on traditional loyalties in drawing the boundaries of local authorities. In Anambra State, the new, all-purpose authorities replaced, and are coterminous with, the former administrative divisions. This is true of most of the southern states. Even in the north, there were minimal changes in Niger State, and in Kwara State where Borgu, Edu, Kogi, Oyi and Oyun local authorities retain their old boundaries.

There were some clear improvements, however, on the old systems in both countries. Very many weak and lilliputian authorities were removed. In Britain, county boroughs were abolished, the number of local authorities was reduced by a quarter, and the chaotic system of delegation in the county areas was abolished. In Nigeria, the 'giant' authorities in the north were broken up and for the first time in the history of the country, there is a uniform system of local government whose existence is guaranteed by the constitution. The American city-manager system in Oyo, Ogun and Ondo States, the Development Administration system in Bendel and Cross River States, the Native Authorities in the northern states and the two-tier French prefectoral system in Imo and Anambra States all disappeared with the 1976 reform. Until 1976, local authorities used to be created and financed by regional/state governments, but with the new system the

Federal Government is a major financier of local authorities and it is therefore not easy for state governments to withhold or withdraw their grants for political reasons. In the past there was a lot of gerrymandering with regional/state governments establishing and dissolving councils as they wished. This will be legally and constitutionally difficult under the present system. Furthermore, not only did the constitution guarantee local government as a third-tier of government in the country, but it also guaranteed their functions. Thus a local authority could take a legal action if it feels that its functions are being eroded by the state government. Lastly, in both countries, the bewildering ranges in population, size and revenue among the same type of local authority have been reduced.

## DEMOCRACY

### Representation

The Nigerian and the British Government emphasized the need for local government to be truly democratic: "Above all else, a genuine local democracy implies that decisions should be taken - and should be seen to be taken - as locally as possible" (Local Government in England: Government Proposals for Reorganization, 1971, para. 8). The Nigerian Government wanted power returned to those people who should exercise decisions locally. Yet we noted in Chapter 6, following Dilys Hill (1974), that democracy is a concept that is open to many interpretations, and in so far as this concept of local democracy has been further developed, it has appeared to rest more upon the need for government to be local than upon any precise analysis of what is required for a system of local government to count as truly democratic. Furthermore, one doubts the claims made for local government as an instrument of representative democracy mainly because of the influence of party politics

on local government and the low turn out at local elections. If elected representatives are to be accountable, they must have control over the matters for which they are brought to account. In the new county authorities the members are faced by increasingly complex and difficult policy decisions, taken by the local party caucus and/or by a large organization whose head office, and therefore whose chief policy advisers, may be located some fifty miles from where the members and their electors reside. This is equally true of the majority of local authorities in Nigeria. In Kwara State, for example, a councillor and his electors who live in Egbe are about 72 miles away from Oyi Local Government headquarters where decisions are taken. A councillor living in Baruba has to travel over 135 miles to get to Kogi Local Government headquarters in New Bussa. In these circumstances, and given Nigeria's poor communications system, it is difficult to believe that the elected members will be any better placed, in terms of either of the skill or of the time and energy that they are able to devote to the job, to make any serious contribution to policy-formulation, or to exercise any real control over the way in which the authority does its business.

The Royal Commission suggested the reformed system would make a wider cross-section of the public readier to offer itself for election thereby restoring the primacy of the councillors (Royal Commission on Local Government in England, 1969, Vol. 1, p. 146). This is pure assertion based primarily on hope. We accept that the new authorities are larger than the existing ones, but their very size means that heavy burdens are laid upon the part-time councillors, responsible not only for running the authority but also for attending to the wishes of their electors. It is certainly difficult and time-consuming to pursue the individual case through the complex local government machinery; yet the councillor must do this on behalf of a large number of his constituents in addition to attending to policy. Particularly if the councillors are going to follow the ethos of the Bains Report by

closely involving themselves in the authority's business, then it would become an almost unbearable burden for the vigorous people, holding down responsible jobs elsewhere in the community, whom the reformers seem to have in mind as the new generation of councillors. The problem of long distances to council offices and meetings and the work-load of the councils are much reduced in the non-metropolitan district councils. But it is doubtful if 'people of calibre' would readily serve on the councils because of their size and resources. Moreover, the mere fact that those who serve on district councils cannot have a say in the major services such as education, social services, transport and road planning must surely deter competent people from wanting to serve on the councils.

The simple fact that voting figures, now running at about 35-38 per cent of the total electorate (and seems to be falling year by year), have not improved, shows that apathy in local council affairs is still widespread. In some areas seats are uncontested. A survey undertaken for The Times (6 August, 1977) revealed a 'widespread lack of public confidence' and the leading article warned that unless the central government took action 'they will be condemning local government to an era of public distrust'. Confirmation of these findings was contained in the Prime Minister's Committee on Local Government Rules of Conduct (1974, pp. 3, 35) which recognized that "there is at present a great deal of disquiet about conduct in local government", and therefore, the need to 'secure public confidence' from what a wider ranging government investigation into the same problems termed a 'grudging electorate' (Royal Commission on Standards in Public Life, 1976, p. 117). Further evidence of public distrust and governmental concern was provided by the Committee on Financial Aid to Political Parties (1976), and in a survey undertaken for the Royal Commission on the Constitution which pointed to a "'we' and 'they' situation" and a "sense of grievance" in which "people tended to feel powerless in the face of government and cut off from it" -

especially if they come from "working class households" (1973, pp. 18-21). These problems are aggravated not only because local elections are so poorly supported that councillors are not really very representative of their constituents, but also because the councillors are amateurs, part-timers with varying interests and ability. Inevitably the officers have to become involved in policy matters. Given their limitations, the councillors (even committee chairmen) can do little more than try to set very general objectives and operate with a 'consumers council' role with regard to controlling the administration. Thus, the calibre of councillors is not likely to improve as long as people feel that local government is not democratic enough. Anxiety about declining councillor calibre is a crude but direct way of highlighting the relative autonomy of local government.

In Nigeria, the customary way of measuring the calibre of councillors is by their educational achievements. The reformed system, it was hoped, would encourage capable and fairly well educated people to offer themselves for service. Nothing since 1976 has shown any improvement. In Oyi Local Government, for example, two of the supervisory councillors were primary school teachers, the chairman was a dispenser and all the other councillors have elementary education only. Moreover, men of calibre are likely to be attracted to serve in the State Assemblies, or the House of Representatives or the House of Senate than on local councils. Our survey (see Table 8.1) shows that 42 per cent of those interviewed said that they would rather contact their Ministries of Local Government to have their problems solved as against the 26 per cent who said that they would contact their councillors. This is an indirect way of passing judgement on the calibre of the new councillors. The citizens still feel they are hopelessly incapable of solving their problems.



TABLE 8.1: IF THERE WAS SOMETHING YOU FELT VERY STRONGLY THAT THE LOCAL AUTHORITY OUGHT OR OUGHT NOT TO BE DOING, WHAT WOULD YOU DO? (%)

|    |                                      |     |
|----|--------------------------------------|-----|
| A. | CONTACT LOCAL COUNCILLOR             | 26% |
| B. | CONTACT MINISTRY OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT | 42% |
| C. | SIGN A PETITION                      | 4%  |
| D. | JOIN A LOCAL PRESSURE GROUP          | 10% |
| E. | DON'T KNOW                           | 18% |

Turn-out is still very low with only 24.9 per cent of registered voters actually voting in the 1976 elections (Oyediran, 1977, p. 26). The total number of uncontested seats is bewildering. Table 8.2 shows that a total of 525 seats in states for which data is available were uncontested,

TABLE 8.2: LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTION, 1976: DISTRIBUTION OF SEATS AND NOMINATION OF CANDIDATES

| STATE   | Total No of Seats | Returned Unopposed | No of Seats Contested | % of Contested Seats | No of Contesting Candidates |
|---------|-------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|
| Bendel  | 186               | 24                 | 162                   | 87.1                 | 515                         |
| Benue   | 194               | 28                 | 166                   | 85.5                 | 512                         |
| Kwara   | 214               | 66                 | 138 <sup>a</sup>      | 64.4                 | 323                         |
| Ogun    | 134               | 64                 | 70                    | 52.2                 | 175                         |
| Ondo    | 251               | 122                | 120 <sup>b</sup>      | 47.8                 | 303                         |
| Oyo     | 436               | 115                | 317 <sup>c</sup>      | 72.7                 | 937                         |
| Plateau | 248               | 39                 | 209                   | 84.2                 | 659                         |
| Rivers  | 189               | 67                 | 122                   | 64.5                 | 332                         |
| TOTAL   | 1,852             | 525 (28.3%)        | 1,104                 | 71.66                | 3,756                       |

Note: a = No candidate was nominated in 10 wards.

b = Elections were not held in 9 wards due to irregularities in nomination process.

c = Four (4) seats were not contested at Ilesa Local Government area.

Source: Oyediran, 1977, p. 26.

TABLE 8.3: ACTUAL VOTERS AS PERCENTAGE OF REGISTERED ELECTORS IN THE  
1976 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS

| STATE   | REGISTERED ELECTORS | ACTUAL VOTERS | PERCENTAGE |
|---------|---------------------|---------------|------------|
| Bendel  | 1,595,839           | 780,009       | 48.88      |
| Benue   | 1,245,778           | 493,556       | 39.62      |
| Kwara   | 1,263,106           | 297,940       | 23.59      |
| Ogun    | 974,239             | 183,689       | 18.85      |
| Ondo    | 2,968,165           | 249,103       | 8.39       |
| Oyo     | 3,277,632           | 663,273       | 20.23      |
| Plateau | 863,337             | 403,257       | 46.70      |
| Rivers  | 1,198,010           | 270,392       | 22.57      |

Source: Oyediran, 1977, p. 28

representing 28.3 per cent of the number of seats; while Table 8.3 portrays the low turn-out of the electorates. This low turn-out could be due to the fact that Nigerians had not had an opportunity to vote for over a decade until the local elections in 1976 and because of their apathy in local council affairs. Another reason could be due to the exclusion of party politics from the elections.

In both countries, therefore, the new systems have failed to bring forth a new type of councillor better able than his predecessors to hold his own with the officials. This problem is made more difficult by the fact that there is no objective barometer for measuring councillor calibre. It is certainly not enough to measure a councillor's capability by his educational achievement alone. Furthermore, the new structures have not improved democratic representation and responsibility because scale enlargement leads to a less favourable ratio of democratic representation, that is, there will be more voters per elected representative. In the light of these

evidences, one can say that the crisis of local representative democracy is yet to be solved.

#### Political Parties and Democracy

The military government excluded party politics from the 1976 local government elections in Nigeria. It is true that party politics played a major role in the demise of the existing system and escalated the rate of corruption in local government administration especially before 1966 (see Chapter 4). But we regard the exclusion of partisan politics from the new system as a serious aberration. It is one of those unfortunate complications arising from a law made by the military for civilian use. Party politics at the local level provides a training ground for political aspirants at the state and national levels. National and local issues can no longer be entirely divorced and the party system enables consistent policies to be pursued over reasonable periods of time, and ensures that councillors are made more responsive to the wishes of the electorate. Moreover, strong and vigorous political parties can revitalise the elected member whose impact is being eroded by the increased technical expertise of officers. Furthermore, parties in local government are bound to arouse electoral interest. Fundamentally, however, party involvement "renders responsibility for the general level of council achievement visible to the public, facilitates judgement at the polls, and through the ups and downs of party fortunes at successive elections, brings shifts in public feeling forcibly to the council's notice" (Warren, 1952, p. 191). Although local partisan politics is barred in some states in the United States of America and in Canada, and although there is a lot to be said against party politics in Nigeria (see, for example, Wraith, 1972), it is surely myopic, given Nigeria's historical development, to expect politics to be kept out of local councils in present day Nigeria.

In fact, our survey shows that 84 per cent of those interviewed said that local elections should be fought on a party political basis. All one can say is that party politics in local government should be sensibly operated. The democratic objective of the reform was also undermined by two elements: the provision which empowers Governors to appoint up to 25 per cent of council members, and the provision for indirect elections to some councils especially in the north. These provisions create an 'elite' which is insufficiently responsive to the needs and wishes of the local population, and make the council less sensitive to a change in local opinion than a wholly elected body might be.

In Britain, if emphasis is to be placed, as the Bains report recommends, on the involvement of as many members as possible in the directing of the council's work, even to the extent of having members of the minority as well as of the majority party on the central coordinating committee (Working Group on Local Authority Management Structures, 1972, para. 4.27), then responsibility for council decisions, even for decisions taken along political lines, will be blurred, and the opportunity of the electorate for passing a political judgement on those decisions commensurately reduced. Second, and more seriously, the two-tier system is bound to reduce the degree to which electors feel able or willing to influence events, not only by creating confusion about which council is responsible for what decisions, but also by requiring him to vote for not one but two local authorities. All the evidence suggests that people can only cope with a very small amount of exercise of the franchise, the only elections that come near to attracting serious interest or giving a fairly accurate picture of opinion being those for Parliament. But even if voters do take an increased interest in local government, the predominance of party politics will mean that they will be effectively prevented from voting on the council's actual record. The 1981 local

government elections lend weight to the view that the overwhelming majority of electors treat local elections merely as an extension of the political contest at national level, and vote for their councillors not on the record of the individual candidates, or even of the council administration, but rather according to their current view of the performance of the national government on purely national issues such as unemployment or monetarism.

The reorganization has increased the impact of party politics in local government because by amalgamating party and non-party authorities the party system has almost invariably spread to the whole. Before the reform, 46 per cent of the 1,166 local authorities for which satisfactory information is available had full party political systems. Out of 330 of the 422 new authorities, 63.7 per cent have party political systems (Norton, 1980, p. 273). It is doubtful if this increased political party affiliation will enhance the democratic quality of local government. If Mallaby's (1974) declaration is true that people of experience and ability, attracted to local government by feelings of care and compassion for neighbouring communities, are turning away from service on district and county councils organized on a party political basis as they fail to see what party politics has to do with domestic issues, then to expect an era when 'men of calibre' will fill town councils is illusory since party politics is on the increase.

### Participation

Another aspect of local democracy which the reformers in both countries had in mind is participation. Democracy requires that local inhabitants participate in the process of political decision making regarding local affairs through their local representative institutions. Territorial democracy, according to Bulpitt (1972, pp. 285-7), rests on

the 'Traditional Orthodoxy' of community, participation, local government, decentralization and democracy. But this 'popular mythology' is ambiguous about how power is actually to be shared between people. The traditional ideal of local people attached to their community and involved in its affairs is quite compatible, in theory and practice, with government by a local elite. Nor is it clear to what extent the citizen is expected to take part beyond the act of voting. If, however, we expand the concept beyond mere voting to encompass things like participation in decision making or physical participation in community activities and affairs, then the reforms have failed to enhance democracy except in parish meetings, and at district or town level in Nigeria.

We have expressed our doubts about the ability of elected members adequately to understand, or control, the activities of their council. This is relevant to popular as well as to representative democracy, since information about particular decisions, and the ability to bring pressure to bear, are most naturally provided to the citizen by his elected representatives. "Direct influence of this sort may still be possible in the district councils, and indeed the weak administrative structure that those authorities may suffer from, combined with the emphasis that they lay on the localization of decision-making, could lead to excessive attention being paid to particular hard cases, to the detriment of proper long-term planning" (Buxton, 1973, p. 266). The councillor's dual role as a policy-maker and people's representative is a difficult one to balance. If, in the district councils, this balance is disturbed, it can at least be said that citizens are exercising some influence over decision-making, even if the long-term interests of the general electorate may not be thus best served. In the counties, however, rather more tangible factors may have to be invoked in the search for elements of popular democracy.

We have also pointed out that the size of the new counties and the remoteness of their headquarters, may prove a serious handicap to their citizens. These factors are bound to increase the citizen's difficulty in finding out from officials what the council is up to. Citizens will also find it hard to believe that such officials would be open to persuasion from those who are affected by their plans and decisions. Just as the new counties are too small to be efficient, so also they are too large for popular democracy which the Government seemed to regard as the most important objective of the reform. The report of the Royal Commission on Local Government in England indicates that "more than three-quarters of those interviewed were conscious of living in a local community, which was defined as the 'home area'" (1969, Vol. 1, p. 62). However, this 'home area' was not necessarily identified with one of the major local authority areas (e.g. borough or rural district). In rural areas, the home area was mostly the 'civil parish or something smaller'. The Government failed to capitalize on this survey to create second-tier authorities which would be small enough to cater for the democratic objective. In short, the new authorities cannot ideally serve as local authorities because the allegiance of their citizens tend to be restricted to a much smaller area than that covered by these new authorities. In fact the citizens of the new metropolitan districts are far more removed from the seat of government than before the reform, and they will suffer the added confusion of the presence of an additional 'upper' tier of local authority. Some of these developments, particularly with regard to the reorganization of county boroughs, were necessary on grounds of efficiency; but the increased size of local government areas must reduce the popular democracy of the new system.

The problem of size and the remoteness of the local government headquarters is no less serious in Nigeria. Except in the north where

the large native authorities have been broken into smaller local authorities, some of which are still very large by any standards, it is difficult to see how the citizens' participation has been enhanced by the reforms. In most parts of the country the old boundaries have been followed in drawing the new ones, and in the south especially, the reform merged many existing small authorities. In these places, therefore, the problem of participation has been left unresolved despite the government's avowed declarations. Amalgamation of former councils has a harmful effect on the citizen's influence on local government. First it leads to a less favourable ratio of democratic representation since there will be more voters per elected representative. Second, it increases the need for appointed and specialized staff which may dwarf the role of local representatives in local government and administration. Finally, it increases the distance between the citizen and his local government; consequently, his influence on local government and administration will diminish proportionately. There is no doubt that it is this distance from the centre of government which has influenced the attitude of those whom we interviewed: 52 per cent of them feel that the present local government set up is neither the best nor the most effective.

As we said above, the increased influence of the non-elected officers is a blur on democratic participation in the new systems in both countries. The attempt to introduce corporate planning into the English local government especially has probably served to strengthen the hands of those officers who are less intimately involved in the direct provision of services to the public and so are more able to take those decisions which are defined as being in the interest of the 'community' as a whole and in the long run without taking into consideration the effects of their decisions on individual citizens or group of citizens. In addition, a key thrust of contemporary reorganization has been the quite overt concern



to 'close up' local authority decision-making to public intervention. The Committee on the Management of Local Government pointed out that "a systematic approach is required to ensure that the component parts of the organization are not distracted by the pressure of current problems" (1967, Vol. 1, p. 48), and the report of the Working Group on Local Authority Management Structures recognized that "some policy changes will inevitably be in the nature of a reaction to outside events" (1972, p. 12). These developments will hinder, rather than enhance participation.

#### Central-Local Government Relations

The independence of local government from central control, and the degree to which local government is entrusted with further powers are important elements both in increasing the responsibility of local government and in increasing the disposition of the citizens to take local government seriously. Considerable criticism was directed at the Royal Commission's proposals because they did not involve any extension of the powers of local government (Walker, 1970, col. 447); but even after the reform, there is considerable evidence that the democratic process is being eroded along with local authorities' sense of responsibility, by the extent and nature of central government controls, the move towards uniformity and the unsympathetic statements made by government leaders. The transfer of local government services away from local government is particularly disturbing. The National Health Service Reorganization Act 1973 took away the remaining personal health services of local authorities, while the Water Act 1973 left them with the minimal responsibilities of testing water purity and administering local sewerage needs. The Local Authority Social Services Act 1970 required local authorities to unify local social services under a single committee, with a director of social services whose appointment must be approved by the

Minister, providing a consolidating and centralizing impact (Ashford, 1976). Added to these are the limitations on local autonomy in the services which local government does control that have been imposed by statutes such as the Housing Finance Act 1972. All these do not augur well for local democracy.

It is generally said that local authorities are agents of the central government and that they lack any real autonomy because of their constitutional position, a public desire for uniform services, and an increased dependence upon central government grants. These assertions may be simplistic but they are true, especially in relation to financial dependence. The Written Evidence of H.M Treasury to the Royal Commission was well aware of the fact that expenditure by local authorities formed a major part of total public expenditure. It regarded it as "therefore inescapable that the central government, and in particular the Treasury, should be increasingly concerned with the need for forward planning and effective control of the movement of local authority expenditure as a whole". It correctly concluded that the "need to exercise closer control over the expenditure of local authorities as a whole is not easily reconciled with the need to give them greater individual freedom to determine both their total expenditure and its distribution between services" (1969, pp. 4-5). This view was substantiated in 1977 when the Labour Government said: "The dilemma which faces central government is to secure and promote an effective local democracy with genuine political choice and at the same time fulfil their responsibilities for the management of the economy and for the standard of public services" (Local Government Finance, 1977, p. 3). These statements should cause us concern in view of the fact that local government is increasingly dependent on central grant.

It is a pity, however, that the reform did not take the implications

of the setting of the contemporary economic situation into serious consideration. At the most general level, the problem of local government can be seen as an aspect of the overall problem of the public sector in a capitalist economy. This is a problem that centres on the sources of state revenue and the scale of public expenditure, and on the scope and direction of state intervention. It is a problem that becomes acute at certain moments, such as now when the Government rate support grant is reduced, resulting in a reduction in working balances, increased rates, and cuts in local expenditure in real terms. The problem of local government, therefore, would appear to be its long-standing fiscal crisis - the tendency for local government expenditure to outpace locally generated income, especially in metropolitan areas. At the core of local government struggle for democracy is the problem of the scale of its expenditure and the nature of its interventions, a problem left unsolved by the reform, and despite the recommendations of the Committee of Inquiry into Local Government Finance (1976), is still unsolved by the Government. This problem is indeed the reason for Mr. Heseltine's recent threat to cut government grants to local authorities that 'overspend'. The Guardian, in its leading article, warned that "it is now an urgent priority to defend local democracy from Mr Heseltine's centralist urge" (3 June, 1981, p. 12). One wonders if Mr Heseltine needs reminding that "local government is the only representative political institution in the country outside Parliament; and being, by its nature, in closer touch than Parliament or Ministers can be with local conditions, local needs, local options, it is an essential part of the fabric of democratic government" (Royal Commission on Local Government in England, 1969, Vol. 1, para. 28).

Central-local relations in Nigeria have not improved with the reform. Unlike the reform in Britain, Nigeria's did restore a number of functions to local government. But like in Britain, local government has become

more dependent on State and Federal Government grants, and the nature and scope of intervention is causing concern. The relationship between the new local authorities and the state governments do not indicate a relaxation of central control. Firstly, the edicts stipulate that a Governor may refuse approval of duly elected candidates for chairmanship, and at least three candidates have to be presented to him out of which he chooses one to become the council's chairman. This is a blur on the principles of representative democracy and gives a Governor the chance to dispense patronages to his cohorts or pliant rear-guard chiefs in the home area. Secondly, the edicts provide that "every chairman of a council shall render his services to that council on such basis as the Governor may determine" (see, for example, Section 27 of Kwara State Edict No. 8 of 1976). This is undemocratic and reflects the state government's desire to control the local authorities as much as they can while claiming to exhort the principles of 'participatory democracy'. Thirdly, complaints have been heard that even the new Nigerian constitution, which endows local government with the status of a 'third tier of government' gives insufficient consideration to the problem of central control (Azinge, 1978). The most evident problem, like in Britain, is in relation to the duplication and sharing of functions. Unlike in Britain, however, the friction is not between two levels of local government but between the local authorities and the states which created them. This friction is not brought about by the structure of local government, however deficient the structure may be, but by the discrepancy between the laws of the statute book and the actual behaviour of state government officials. The reformed system has not been followed up by a change in the pattern of behaviour of state government officials on the one hand, and as we shall see later, of local government councillors and officers on the other hand. It is depressing to find that the old practice

whereby regional and state governments took over local government services rather than strengthen their resources is still in vogue. We will return to these points later including the power of dissolution which has been used to excess since October 1979. First, let us analyse the more obvious forms of control.

(a) Policy Control

Close supervision of all major policy decisions is still pervasive. Local authorities are required to reach a technical standard of administrative performance acceptable to the state governments. Before any project can be embarked upon the relevant department in the local government organization is required to seek the advice of the appropriate specialists in the state ministries. Under the old system each chief officer of a local authority department was required to consult their counterparts in the central ministry for approval of items to be included in the department's submission to its own finance committee when the authority's budget was being prepared (Yahaya, 1975). This is still part of the general budgetary procedure. Complex projects are supervised throughout implementation by an official of the appropriate state government ministry. For example, local education authorities are guided by the ministry of education in all professional decisions concerning the development and maintenance of primary education. Inspectors check school records, especially records of cash transactions and fees. Even when projects have been included in the approved development plan for the year, specific sanction must be obtained from the ministry of finance on each one. Some state governments have even gone so far as to pay grants in respect of educational buildings direct to the contractors after awarding the contracts themselves, necessitating the processing of claims in the state capital with all the attendant bureaucratic delays. Grants are used by the centre as a flexible instrument reflecting changes

in central policy. The grant mechanism is used to try and ensure that proper records are kept, to check on expenditure trends and to prevent fraud.

Policy control is not restricted to initiatives taken by local councils. States direct authorities to pursue policy objectives. This is clearest in the field of primary education which consumes by far the largest proportion of local expenditure on services (see Tables 8.4 and 8.5). But it also extends to minor areas, such as requiring local authorities to participate in road safety campaigns. Local authorities are also given guidance on how to use their powers. In Kaduna State, for example, local councils were urged by the state government to encourage self-help, to teach people how to use the resources available under Operation Feed the Nation, and mobilise the masses. Local authorities in parts of Kwara have been told to extend property rating. In Kaduna State, councils have been told to give primary education priority in their development plans and were warned that funds for 'low priority projects' would be diverted to primary education by the state. In Lagos State the central authorities have urged councils to pay particular attention to the construction and maintenance of roads, public conveniences and markets. In Cross River, local authorities have been advised to complete existing projects before embarking on new ones, to intensify their revenue collecting efforts, and to keep their traditional rulers out of party politics. In 1980 local governments in Ogun State were instructed to select twelve roads for priority development, this being a major area of concentration by the state government in its rural development policy. Lists of selected projects were to be submitted to the state House of Assembly since Members saw this as their right as elected representatives of the people (New Nigerian, 6 February, 1980).

TABLE 8.4: DISTRIBUTION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING BETWEEN SERVICES,  
1962 - 1980  
 (Eastern Region and Anambra State)

|                    | EASTERN REGION 1962-3 |      | ANAMBRA STATE 1979-80 <sup>a</sup> |      |
|--------------------|-----------------------|------|------------------------------------|------|
|                    | £ '000                | %    | ₦ '000                             | %    |
| Administration     | 497.5                 | 11.2 | 9.0                                | 11.7 |
| Judicial           | 403.9                 | 9.1  | --                                 | --   |
| Education          | 1,486.0               | 33.4 | 57.9                               | 75.6 |
| Health             | 627.9                 | 14.1 | 3.7                                | 4.8  |
| Works              | 1,177.4               | 26.3 | 4.0                                | 5.2  |
| Agriculture        | 26.6                  | 0.6  | 2.1                                | 2.7  |
| Trade and Industry | 3.0                   | 0.1  | --                                 | --   |
| Other              | 232.6                 | 5.2  | --                                 | --   |
| TOTAL              | 4,434.9               | 100  | 76.7                               | 100  |

a = estimates

Sources: Anambra State, Local Government Approved Estimates, 1979-80;  
 Eastern Region, Native Treasury Estimates

TABLE 8.5: LOCAL GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURE IN THE NORTHERN REGION AND  
KADUNA STATE

|                    | NORTHERN REGION 1963-4 |      | KADUNA STATE 1975-6 |       |
|--------------------|------------------------|------|---------------------|-------|
|                    | £ '000                 | %    | ₦ '000              | %     |
| Administration     | 2,039.8 <sup>a</sup>   | 17.7 | 2,814 <sup>d</sup>  | 14.17 |
| Judicial           | 1,209.5                | 10.5 | --                  | --    |
| Education          | 1,907.7                | 16.6 | 13,681              | 71.3  |
| Health             | 941.3                  | 8.2  | 1,325               | 6.9   |
| Public Works       | 2,812.0                | 24.4 | 569 <sup>e</sup>    | 2.9   |
| Social Services    | 1,809.9                | 15.7 | 802                 | 4.2   |
| Agriculture        | 484.4 <sup>b</sup>     | 4.2  | --                  | --    |
| Trade and Industry | 307.1 <sup>c</sup>     | 2.7  | --                  | --    |

a Includes district council funds

b Includes animal and forest resources

c Includes commercial undertakings

d Includes Public Complaints Bureau, public debts charges, payments to the capital development fund, revenue & grants to statutory bodies & contributions to other authorities.

e Includes housing and 'lands and survey' departments.

Sources: Ministry of Economic Planning, Northern Nigeria (1966); Ministry of Economic Planning & Rural Development, North Central State (now Kaduna State) 1976

The states now have their representatives even more closely involved in the daily management of local affairs through the secretaries to the new local authorities than before the reform (see Appendix II). These chief executives are generally civil servants from the state's ministry of local government, responsible to the permanent secretary. The local government edicts confer on the secretaries the functions previously conferred on residents, district officers, divisional officers, sole administrators and similar officials of the state governments. In addition they now become the chief executives with all the local authority departmental heads answerable to them. In Anambra, for example, the administrative organization of each local authority 'revolves around' the chief executive who is responsible for the implementation of all council decisions. The secretary, significantly, is "responsible for ensuring that the decisions of the council accord with Government policies (emphasis mine). When any decision of the council appears at variance with Government policy, it is the duty of the Chief Executive to advise the council and clear the position with the appropriate Ministry before carrying out the decision" (Anambra State, 1976, p. 13). The integration of the local administration is further emphasized by the duty placed on secretaries to "perform such other functions as assigned to them by the State Government, for which they are held directly responsible to the Cabinet Office" (Anambra State, 1976, p. 14). Secretaries also control the deployment of staff within the authority, subject to overall control by the state's Local Government Service Board. In our survey, 98 per cent of the secretaries who were interviewed said that their allegiance is first towards their boss in the ministry rather than the chairman of the local authority. This is not surprising since their salaries and promotions come from the states' civil services. It is for these reasons that they are regarded as district officers in a different guise,



and "the duality of their role tends therefore to militate against the autonomy of the new Local Governments" (Aliyu, 1978, p. 284). In addition, local government inspectors have been appointed and authorised to attend council and committee meetings, inspect accounts and other records and advise the local authorities on the use of their powers. This system seems to perpetuate the over-centralization of the old, leading one expert to conclude that "Local Governments are not going to be as autonomous as would appear from the Guidelines" (Aliyu, 1978, p 284). However, it must be remembered that a lot depends on the calibre of state ministry staff, and this has not always been high enough to guarantee effective control in pursuit of better administration.

Policy control extends beyond decision-making to envelop the choice of crucial decision-makers within local political institutions. The Federal Government's policy statement gave state governors the power to select from their council nominees the chairmen of a council and its committees or make the decision for the council if it cannot agree within a prescribed period on a choice of candidates. The choice of members of General Purposes Committees (the local authority's cabinet), political heads of departments and the chairmen of any other standing committee are also subject to the approval of the state governor. Most states adopted these controls by including them in the edicts which put the federal policy into effect. Conflicts have occurred between local authorities and state governors over the approval of council nominees. Some governors have been suspected of using this power as a political weapon. There have been moves in some states to amend the edicts to free councils from central control over the selection of key office-holders. Elsewhere, however, the central power seems to have been extended by state executives issuing instruction as to which functions would come under the jurisdiction of each supervisory councillor and how various committees

would be composed.

An unusual feature of the new system is the provision for nominated members to be appointed to local councils. This stems from the naive misconception contained in the Federal Government's policy document that such a group of councillors could 'concentrate on the development of their Local Government area' in a non-partisan way (Guidelines, 1976, para. 25). How it could be thought that such an activity can be non-partisan is not made clear. Nevertheless, the edicts provide for the nomination by the state governor of up to 25 per cent of council members. This power, then, is not the more usual one of co-option, whereby local councillors bring into their committees people whose advice, experience or expertise they value. It is rather one of central control to be exercised by the state executive. It should therefore be of some concern when a nominated member is selected by the state executive to be chairman of a local council or to occupy some other important post such as supervisory councillor. In Bauchi State, for example, nominated members occupy 35 per cent of key posts and 70 per cent of the chairmanships. Elsewhere in the northern states, however, the proportion of chairmanships occupied by nominated members falls to 25 per cent. The requirement that at least 75 per cent of local councillors should be elected is, nevertheless, a considerable improvement on the system in operation prior to the military takeover, when in the north, for example, only 33.7 per cent of councillors in local government were on average elected (Campbell, 1963, pp. 66-8).

Accompanying this control of the membership of council is a continuing state control over the appointment of traditional rulers. The new system allows for a greatly reduced role for emirs, chiefs and other traditional heads of communities. However, they have been assigned responsibilities which could turn out to have considerable local significance, such as determining religious matters, advising local

authorities on policy, 'coordinating' development plans, assisting in the assessment and collection of community tax, determining and declaring customary law (including that affecting land tenure) and assisting in the maintenance of law and order. These responsibilities, combined with the natural authority still assigned to traditional leaders by communities in many parts of Nigeria, suggest that they will remain a potent force in local politics for some time to come.

The significance of the fact that the state executive has to 'recognise' traditional leaders before they can occupy these positions varies from one part of the country to another. The succession to a title in some of the larger dynasties may be self-evident so that state endorsement is a formality. In some parts of the country, such as Anambra, traditional titles relate to relatively small communities within the new local government areas, and the state executive has decided not to 'meddle' in the 'primary processes' of community selection involved. The identification, selection and installation of traditional leaders devolves on their committees (Anambra State, 1976, p. 11). However, the ultimate endorsement of traditional leaders in most areas rests with the state executives.

#### (b) Budgetary Control

Overall control of the local budget has not diminished in intensity. Each budget has to be drawn up according to a prescribed format. Any departure from this requires central approval. The budgetary process commences with a circular from the ministry which sets out the principles which should guide the authority in drawing up its estimates of revenue and expenditure. 'Preliminary' estimates are prepared on the basis of these principles. Some items of revenue and expenditure even require prior approval by the ministry before they can be included in the preliminary estimates. These 'advance proposals' include changes in the level of local taxes, new administrative posts and an intention to continue a

commercial undertakings which has run at a loss for three consecutive years. Ministry officials assist in the definition of policy objectives, advise on the reasonableness and feasibility of budgets and issue warnings: "the existence of these constraints eloquently articulate the weak and dependent status of local authorities" (Adedeji and Rowland, 1972, p. 227). The professional staff of other ministries are authorised by the ministry of local government to check estimates relating to their policy area. The state ministry of education, for example, checks the estimates of local education authorities to decide upon the services and projects to be undertaken and to evaluate their financial soundness. It is also concerned to test whether the right calibre of staff are being employed and to prevent money for salaries being diverted to other purposes. On the revenue side the ministry of education fixes the per capita rates which local authorities can levy for such specific items as school furniture, buildings, books and stationery. Officials from the ministry work closely with the local authorities in the preparation of estimates and their advice must be complied with.

After a budget has been processed by a local authority and its committees it is passed to the ministry for local government for approval. No authority has the power to raise any revenue or incur any expenditure unless it is embodied in a centrally approved budget. The state government can specify the proportion of expenditure to be allocated to recurrent and capital programmes and, within these, the proportional allocation between departments and the percentage for salaries and wages. An authority with a poor revenue record may have its budget cut.

Comparable controls are exercised over capital expenditure, including procedures and principles to be followed in the preparation of capital or development plans. The ministry can alter a plan after consultation with the local authority concerned. Any disagreement between a local

department and a central technical ministry is settled by the ministry for local government. Before development plans are approved the competence of local authority staff is checked, and the ministry satisfies itself as to the adequacy of local administration and whether costs are realistic, reasonable and correct (Aliyu and Koehn, 1980). Councils are advised on which kinds of capital projects they should concentrate.

Budgetary control is the main instrument by means of which the centre ensures that local policy making and expenditure are consistent with state policies and priorities. In addition inspectors from the central ministries are entitled to attend all council meetings, and are beginning to emerge as more powerful than either the secretary or treasurer to the council (Aliyu and Koehn, 1980, p. 45).

(c) Control over Internal Organization

Extensive central controls over the internal administrative organization of local government have always been enforced, and these have not been reduced by reform. Under the old system the appointment of senior officials, such as clerk to the council, treasurer and supervisor of works, required central approval. Conditions of service for local government service were regulated and salaries were determined by technical departments at the centre. The management of local authority staff was carried out in accordance with a common set of staff regulations for local authorities in each region. The central government required certain committees to be appointed, such as an establishment committee for personnel functions. Financial procedures were closely controlled by the memoranda issued by the central ministry (Campbell, 1963). And the centre decided what criteria and standards had to be met before an authority could be classified as needing less direction from above.

The Financial Memoranda in use since the reform and endorsed by the local government edicts do not relax the centre's control of internal

council procedures. They contain instructions which 'shall be observed and complied with by all Local Governments, for the better control and management of the financial business of Local Governments in the State'. They provide detailed guidance and instruction of the financial and accounting procedures to be followed by all local authorities. These go far beyond procedures for the preparation and approval of annual and supplementary estimates. They define the precise duties and responsibilities of councils, committees and senior officials in regard to funds, stores and financial management, including ensuring that there is compliance with the Financial Memoranda. They prescribe certain organizational arrangements for collecting and accounting for revenues and controlling expenditure, including how to organize bank accounts, strong rooms, cash flows, tax censuses, payment vouchers and the regular reconciliation of departmental spending. They specify the accounting objectives, principles and practices to be followed and the records and statements to be maintained and prepared monthly and at the end of the financial year. Procedures for the preparation of local development plans are prescribed. Councils are reminded that 'these Financial Memoranda are mandatory and shall apply to all local governments and all institutions in which a local government has a substantial financial interest, unless the authority approving such an arrangement specifically directs that certain provisions of the Financial Memoranda shall not apply either partially or wholly to any institution'.

Local authority accounts are subject to audit by the state government's auditor, and controls over staffing arrangements have increased. The Guidelines (1976) stipulate that each state should set up a combined local government service for the more highly trained cadres. This service was to be strengthened 'far beyond the limits of existing staff' by transfers and secondments from the state administrations. Local Government Service Boards (LGSB) would be given responsibility for the

deployment of all members of the combined staff and would delegate internal postings and minor disciplinary matters to a local authority's establishment committee. Gradings, pensions, gratuities and other retirement benefits were to be brought into line with equivalent posts in the state civil service. The only choice open to the states when reorganizing this part of their local government systems was between giving the board entire control over postings or allowing local authorities to select from candidates submitted to them by the board after it has processed applications and chosen suitably qualified persons.

State governments not only determine the grading structure for local authority employees. They also determine where particular officers in a specified authority should be placed in that structure. For example, the secretaries of Kaduna, Zaria, Katsina and Birnin-Gwari have been designated GL.15. The relative grading positions of different officers is also specified - heads of departments relative to their secretaries, section heads relative to their heads of department and so on. Central regulations also determine the number of senior staff to be employed. In education, for example, the size of school population determines the number of education officers to which an authority is entitled, and their salary scales.

It is not surprising that conflicts of loyalty arise, leading to conflicts within a local authority. Council chairmen perceive their secretaries as their senior civil servants. The secretaries, however, see themselves as representatives of the state executive. They have taken important initiatives in the development of local policies. Some have had to be warned against acting as the 'overlords' of their councils after they had begun to adopt a supervisory stance, advising councillors on the right attitudes to adopt, addressing inaugural meetings and generally taking a centralist perspective on local government (New Nigerian, 12

January and 25 February 1977).

Some states, such as Lagos, have begun to repeal those parts of the local government law relating to the position of the paid officers, arguing that a gubernatorial system was as appropriate at local level as at state, and that the council chairman should be the chief executive of the local authority, perhaps even with direct elections to that office.

The state ministry of local government is at the hub of the control system. The Guidelines (1976, pp. 11-12) propose the establishment of such a ministry in each state to channel the required financial and technical support to local authorities.

#### (d) Centralization of Functions

Appendix I shows the functions which are exclusive and those in which local authorities in Nigeria are to 'participate'. This provision was later enshrined in the fourth schedule of the constitution. In terms of legal and constitutional provisions, then, local government is extraordinarily well placed to perform a major role in local development, both economic and social. However, the problems of shortage of professional staff, lack of finance and the calibre of councillors will prevent the devolution of most concurrent functions in the near future (Aliyu, 1978, p. 284). In some states even functions in the exclusive list, such as markets, motor parks and property rating, have not been devolved. In Lagos, for example, the state decided in 1977 to set up a new authority to administer the recently completed Tejuosho market though Mainland local council claimed jurisdiction under the 1976 edict. Kwara State allocated 8.2 million naira in the same year for the development of 13 modern markets to be located in the administrative centres of the state's local authorities. In Oyo the state Property Development Corporation has been sued for a housing programme of 25,000 new housing units by 1983 (West Africa, 28 April, 1980). Many of the



functions on the concurrent list, such as housing, land-use planning, refuse management and water supply, are already in the hands of special purpose bodies (Olowu, 1979, p. 5).

The state governments had tended to regard the local authorities as their agents. They have not felt constrained by the various formal allocations of powers between states and localities which exist in edicts, policy statements and the constitution. Thus the picture that is emerging is one of a very pragmatic distribution of responsibilities with the states engaging in whatever activities they regard as necessary. Hardly any function is seen as the sole preserve of local government. In 1977, for example, Lagos State decided to set up a special purpose agency for refuse clearance and disposal in and around the city because the local authorities could not cope. At the same time, it was announced that the state had spent 1.2 million naira on refuse equipment for local authorities in the Lagos metropolitan area (New Nigerian, 8 January 1977). Kwara State government has been directly involved in housing, health, water and agricultural services. Cooperation between all three levels of government - federal, state and local - has been sought in Niger State in the provision of rural clinics. Local authorities and the state forestry department in Bornu have combined in an effort to prevent further desert encroachment. Kaduna State's agricultural programme has involved grants to local councils for the distribution of bulls to mixed farms. There have been joint ventures in Imo State between local government and the state water corporation in the provision of boreholes, generating plant, pumps and tanks. In primary education, which officially became a joint responsibility of federal, state and local governments in 1976, both state and local authorities are agents for the implementation of a national scheme. In Ogun the state government recently spent 6 million naira on textbooks for primary and

secondary schools. Bauchi State has found it necessary to appoint a special committee of civil servants to deal with the duplication of functions between state and local government and advise on functions which need to be transferred to the local councils, given financial considerations and the local government edict.

In some states the weak financial position of the local authorities has forced them to look to the state for the provision of services and amenities which they would otherwise have provided themselves. In Anambra, for example, local councils have pressured the state for better roads, especially in food producing areas, and pipe-borne water. In Ondo local authorities have asked the state to take over primary education since their obligations would incur deficits of between 700,000 and 1.1 million naira in 1979-80 when they are not allowed to present deficit budgets. Sardauna local government in Gongola State has sought greater state involvement in the provision of roads which demanded such a large proportion of its budget. What all these prove is not just the transfer of functions to the states, but, more seriously, the duplication, fragmentation and wastage which they entail. The problem is compounded by the fact that the state governments themselves are hardly more efficient than the local authorities.

#### (e) Suspension and Dissolution

Local government, unfortunately, finds itself at the centre of political and legal controversy in Nigeria, which compounds political machinations with constitutional interpretations. The state executives were given the power to suspend or dissolve a council if an executive is satisfied that a council was not discharging its functions in a manner conducive to the welfare of the inhabitants of its area, or had failed to hold the meetings which the law requires. A council can be suspended or dissolved for three months after which time elections must be held or the old council

reinstated. During the period of dissolution the executive council is required to appoint a committee of management with the power to discharge all the council's functions. The widespread use of this power soon after the return to civilian government is a disappointing feature of the new system in operation. The fact that it has proved so easy for the new state governments to dissolve local councils and replace them with decision makers who, if they are representative of or responsive to anyone at all it is the state leadership, should cause some dismay among those who have put their faith in local democracy as the guarantor of national democracy and stability.

In fact since 1979 virtually all local councils have been dissolved and replaced by caretaker management committees appointed by the state governor. The justification for this has either been mismanagement on the part of local councillors or the state's inability to organize fresh elections at the end of the councillor's first term of office. However, the dissolutions have been kept in force well beyond the statutory time limit of three months. In some cases there have been court actions when the legality of dissolutions has been challenged, as happened in Rivers State in November 1979. Elsewhere, allegations of manipulation in pursuit of partisan advantage have been made, as in Oyo State in January 1980 when the state branch of the National Party of Nigeria (NPN) accused the Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN), which was in control at the state level, of packing the management committees, with which the executive had replaced the state's local governments, with its own activists in compensation for them not having been chosen as UPN candidates in the 1979 state and national elections. There have been many other accusations of this kind, especially when dissolutions were enforced before the natural expiry of electoral terms. In Kwara the NPN itself was accused by the

Nigerian Peoples Party (NPP) of using the caretaker committees which it had appointed to 'subjugate' members of other political parties prior to the holding of new local elections, and of appointing its 'agents' to these committees. The partisan motivation behind many of the dissolutions is evident in the justifications offered for them. In Benue, for example, the House of Assembly passed a resolution requesting the executive to dissolve all the local councils in the state, claiming that the councillors were 'handpicked by the last military administration' and that the council chairmen had been victimising their political opponents (West Africa, 26 November 1979). Unfortunately partisan motives therefore seem to predominate in the use of the dissolution power, though allegations of mismanagement are always made. Dissolution has been used to punish areas that did not give electoral support to the party in power.

It is undoubtedly the case that the wholesale mass dissolution of councils is the cause of serious confusion. This confusion is between the power of a governor to dissolve a council because investigation has revealed maladministration, and the decision to suspend all councils more or less indefinitely. The former is an administrative action. The latter concerns the whole basis of the system and is therefore a legislative matter. In sweeping away all councils the state executives seem to be confusing an administrative power of central control with a legislative function, that of responsibility for the local government system as a whole. It is also hard to believe, when there are mass dissolutions, that all local authorities in a state are simultaneously guilty of mismanagement, especially when there have been few investigations, required by the law, to prove this, though this was claimed to be the case in Lagos when the governor suspended every council on the grounds that they were "no longer discharging their functions in a manner conducive

to the welfare of the inhabitants" (New Nigerian, 26 March, 1980).

Hence it appears as if mass dissolution and the replacement of elected councils by appointed committees defies the constitution which guarantees representative local government. Dent's criticism identifies the political motive behind the fusion of administrative and legislative powers:

A further aspect of excess state government power is their apparent assumption that since local government is within their sphere of legislative competence, they can use this power to appoint their own political supporters to management committees to run local government councils. Section 7 of the constitution GUARANTEES elected local government by elected local government councils (1980, p. 1887).

Similarly, the issue of local government reorganization has become a matter of electoral manipulation for partisan advantage. Many of the proposals to create more units of local government are designed to give the ruling party an advantage in the next round of local elections, or to redress grievances arising from the politically motivated sub-division of some states for local government purposes in 1976. The fact that the constitution stipulates that a candidate for the governorship must win one quarter of the votes in at least two-thirds of the local government areas in the state means that a governor who can create more local authorities in areas where his party has strong electoral support can significantly improve his chance for a second term of office. While there can be no objection to a party promising in its election manifesto to reform the local government system in pursuit of improved administration, this should be kept distinct in the public mind from attempts to gerrymander gubernatorial and other elections. It is a pity, therefore, that many of the recently advocated 'reforms' appear to be thinly veiled attempts to gerrymander the structure in the interest of the dominant party at the state level.

## Conclusion

The new system of local government in Nigeria continues very firmly in a tradition of central control stretching back to colonial times. The new status endowed by the constitution is outweighed by a subjection to central controls which extend well beyond the power to veto local initiatives and enable central authorities to promote their own policies using local governments as their agents. Both sanction and influence are used equally extensively. The motives for central control are highly political and paternalistic.

Anyone commenting adversely on this is likely to be reminded of the grave administrative problems faced by local authorities because of the poor calibre of their staff and councillors. These factors in the local situation cannot be denied. But it is equally important to remember that poor standards of administration are not the exclusive prerogative of local government. The centre's record has not been an unblemished one. Many additional problems are created for local government by delays in decision making at the centre, ranging from the approval of annual estimates to the countersigning of payment vouchers. Councils have often found themselves well into the financial year before final approvals are received. Both morale and efficiency can be undermined by the late or non-payment of central grants. Badly designed forms impose extra burdens on those required to furnish the ministry with detailed records and statistics. Problems snowball when complex submissions required from local authorities produce queries from the ministry which have to be followed up. Confusion can arise from the dispersal of central controls among different central authorities, especially when they all apply to the same subject, such as having the governor approve councillors' salaries, the commissioner approve heads of departments' salaries and the local government secretary approve the

salaries of other officials. Nor does the centre always rigorously observe the requirement to consult a local authority before deleting or amending an item on its estimates. Useful advice on development planning has been rare. A lack of familiarity with local problems on the part of headquarters' staff has led to the issuing of unworkable instructions, especially in circulars of general application to widely varied circumstances (Adewumi, 1973, p. 47). Central auditors are not always familiar with local government accounting methods, and there have been cases of cancelled accounts which later turned out to be correct. Delays in completing audit, sometimes up to five years, have often meant that they impose no threat to the potential fraud or embezzler. It has sometimes been felt that the central authorities have actually discouraged the recruitment of qualified staff on the basis of merit in local government in order to divert good people into the civil service and to make it easier to control local authorities. Good staff have even been demoted for refusing to move out of local government into the State's administrative service.

Excessive central control can also be dysfunctional in the response which it may elicit from repressed local authorities. If circulars are expressed in too technical a language for the local officials they "may assume that no serious action is anticipated" (Adewumi, 1973, p. 46). If local authority personnel requirements are rejected attempts may be made to run services without the necessary qualified staff. If the state forces its own appointees on unwilling local authorities they have "a clever way of frustrating such people ... either by entrusting responsibilities in the hands of people more junior to them or creating a difficult working climate" (Adewumi, 1973, p. 51). The feeling that staff have been imposed by the centre may reduce the interest and confidence of the public in local government and consequently the

willingness to pay tax at a time when tax evasion is already a serious problem for local authorities (Oyediran, 1974<sup>A</sup>, p. 551). Local authorities may try to circumvent central controls over contracts for capital projects by breaking down contracts into amounts smaller than those which require Tenders Board approval or by purchasing materials in bulk for contractors to use, again reducing the cost to avoid central scrutiny and expert advice which may run counter to the authority's own views and intentions (Adewumi, 1973, p. 55).

It is extremely difficult to strike the right balance between central control and local autonomy, especially in conditions of under-development. How that balance works out in practice will depend on a number of factors, and not just on formal relationships. Some of these are associated with the political and organizational circumstances which condition the interaction between different levels of government. The attitudes of central ministries to local authorities may vary. Local authorities in their turn may be able to bargain and negotiate successfully with higher levels of government. They themselves will vary in the resources which they have at their disposal for resisting central control. Central agencies may not be able to present a consistent policy. Local governments may receive conflicting guidance from different departments on expenditure and levels of service provision. Such incompatibility and obscurity may be virtues as far as local autonomy is concerned (Harris, 1978).

However, they may be vices if they lead to negative responses from local authorities, or undermine their fragile administrative viability, or produce a reaction at the local level which is self destructive as well as defensive. It seems likely that the present atmosphere and machinery of central control over local government in Nigeria will lead to expectations of local autonomy being frustrated, with the inevitable



consequences for locally administered services. Obviously this part of the machinery of government cannot be artificially dissociated from the political struggles taking place at state level. However, if local groups begin to feel that their local institutions can never amount to anything more than mere pawns in the games of higher level politicians and that the gap between expectations and reality is increasing, government at both levels will be brought into disrepute.

Thus, although democracy is one of the guiding objectives behind the reinstatement of representative local government in the 1976 reform, it is inaccurate to identify it with local government. The doctrinary inclination with regard to democracy has led many people "to link, then merge and confuse decentralization and democracy" (Fesler, 1964, p. 3). Events since 1976 demonstrate that local government is not of necessity identical with democracy, and that special measures must be taken to ensure that local government is democratic (Smith and Owojaiye, 1981).

The reforms, however, did bring a few gains from the point of view of their democratic objective. In Nigeria, the electorate had their first chance in over a decade to exercise their democratic rights at the polls. The 1976 elections were necessary appetizers for the 1979 state and national elections. The voting age was lowered to 18 years from 21 years and universal suffrage was introduced throughout the country for the first time. Lastly, democracy was further strengthened by greatly reducing the role of traditional leaders in local government affairs. In Britain, a large number of trivial controls have been abolished, local authorities now suffer less interference on planning matters, some local powers have been clarified or expanded, the small amount an authority can spend for the benefit of its area beyond the services for which it has statutory provision has been substantially increased, and the government auditor's powers in connection with local authority expenditure

have been narrowed. We should not exaggerate the loss of municipal functions. Local authorities are still critically involved in important and fast-growing sectors of social provision. They have made significant functional gains such as the 1947 Civic Restaurant Act which empowered local authorities to provide and administer restaurants and to supply meals to the public; the Clean Air Act, 1956, which allowed local authorities to establish smoke control areas; the 1962 National Assistance Act which enabled county and county borough councils to provide meals and recreation for old people instead of using voluntary bodies for this purpose; and perhaps the most important 'gain' was the Town and Country Planning Act, 1947 which introduced a comprehensive system for the control of development. Two other innovations which the reform brought about are worth mentioning because they are vital for democracy. Firstly, under the 1972 Act press and public have a right to attend committee meetings. Secondly, the establishment of the office of the ombudsman enables claims and grievances of citizens to be dealt with equitably. The increasing powers of both central and local government to make decisions affecting various rights of the citizen make it necessary to provide effective remedies, through the ombudsman, which protect him against unjust administrative action.

#### EFFICIENCY

It is really inconceivable that one can talk of efficiency and effectiveness of local authorities in both countries amidst the many problems which we have enumerated so far in this chapter. If the functional/structural divisions are not based on any rational criteria, with a lot of overlapping, fragmentation and duplication of functions between different tiers of local government leading to wastage and conflicts; if the councils do not have enough resources, both finance

and manpower, to perform their duties efficiently; if they are not even free to exercise basic democratic rights; if representation and participation have been killed by excessive central control; if serious limitations are placed on local autonomy by national control of its expenditure; and if the calibre of councillors and officers has not improved with the reforms; then one can certainly conclude that there has been little or no improvement in efficiency. In other words, there is an intricate connection between the functional/structural and democratic objectives on the one hand, and efficiency on the other hand. And since our evaluation shows that the first set of objectives have not been adequately achieved by the reform, then the last objective, efficiency, has certainly suffered too. What we have analysed so far therefore portrays the inefficient and ineffective operation of local government, especially in Nigeria. What remains for us to evaluate, therefore, is the internal administration of the councils.

As with the case of democracy, so with functional efficiency have the realities of local government outrun the assumptions on which the system is based. At the beginning of the century, the task of local government in Britain was mainly one of simple administration, providing the basic services and otherwise interfering very little with the citizens' free conduct of their affairs. But now, when local government is a huge machine handling a variety of complex functions and trespassing directly upon private interests, the independence of the elected member in pursuing the grievances of his constituents is compromised by his formal responsibility for the acts of the council, however little he may in fact be in control of policy-making or of official administration. Although the councillors' policy-making role may give them access to the machine of a kind that popular representatives would not otherwise enjoy, it does so by making those representatives part of the machine, implicated

both in the decisions and in the efficiency of its administration. This dilemma is, in our view, the fatal flaw in the position of the elected councillor. It is very doubtful whether 'part-time' councillors could effectively act either as policy-makers or as the instrument of popular democracy. What does seem clear is that, by attempting to sustain both roles at once, they are prevented from the proper discharge of either.

The Maud Report, the Redcliffe-Maud Report and the Bains Report all made serious attempts to improve the internal management of local government. Little has changed, however, since the reform. A survey by Greenwood et al (1974, 1975, 1976) which tried to identify the salient features of the management structures of the new authorities in order to see how they compare with the structures prevalent before reform shows that very few local authorities have streamlined the numbers of committees. In fact many local authorities have even been forced to reinflate numbers of members per committee in order to give members 'something to do' (Greenwood et al, 1975, p. 7). The Bains Report went beyond simply proposing a reduction in the number and size of committees, since it also had regard as to the criteria to be used in dividing up committee responsibilities. Local authorities were advised to adopt the 'programme committee' concept, and although this has not been rejected explicitly by local authorities, the specific committees set out in the Bains Working Group's Report (1972) are not always accepted and several traditional committees have survived reorganization (Greenwood et al, 1975, p. 8).

The survey also discussed the emergence of area committees and the use of informal working groups of councillors, but it recognized that these were "still comparatively rare innovations" (Greenwood et al, 1975, p. 9). They declared that the policy committee was an 'established feature' of English local government, and reorganization has brought to

a head the pre-reorganization movement towards the policy committee as the hub of the committee system. But although the Bains Report stressed the quite crucial importance of monitoring and reviewing established policies and commitments and wanted to see a performance review sub-committee, 'fewer than half' the new authorities have followed this crucial piece of advice.

Furthermore, traditional departments have, by and large, retained their status and few authorities would appear to have broken from the professional base. There are a number of authorities, particularly counties and to a lesser extent shire districts which still adopt the 'traditional professional-department approach' (Greenwood et al, 1976). These authorities all have the 'primary corporate mechanisms' of chief executives, management teams, and policy committees, but they simply 'do not operate in the corporate way that was envisaged by Bains'. The truth of the matter is that 'there are some local authorities where the corporate structure exists on paper but it has little or nothing to do with the actual operation of policy-making'. Even at a more general level, the corporate additions of the chief executive, management team, corporate groups, and policy committee have to a large extent been overlain onto the ongoing operating structure of line departments and service committees (Greenwood et al, 1976).

At a general level, the departmental structures, established at the time of reorganization, have changed little since then, and the "tension ... between central departments and service departments has been exacerbated since reorganization" (Greenwood et al, 1976, p. 17). New departments that have been created out of a number of other departments have 'often suffered more from cutbacks' and have been the subject of major 'conflicts' and 'antagonisms'. The continuing strength of the established departments and professional groups is revealed in 'the lack of commitment to inter-

disciplinary working groups in many authorities'; in the 'considerable doubt in many authorities about the value of central corporate planning units'; in the fact that 'very few authorities have central research and intelligence units'; and in the fact that personnel management 'does not tend to play an important part as was envisaged before reorganization' and chief officers have had to spend their time 'plugging the gaps' (Greenwood et al, 1976). The management team has been a problematic innovation. Few authorities have taken the Bains advice and created a small team because of the social problems of resentment, suspicion, and communication where certain officers are excluded. Where a team has tried to develop a sense of 'collective responsibility' this has frequently evoked considerable hostility on the part of members. Simply expressed,

it is not clear that the management team has been one of the successes since reorganization: unity at a personal level has not necessarily permeated the authority and subsequently led to integrated departmental work relations between the disparate departments; agendas have been clustered with too much detail; and consensus management has too often obliterated a necessary diversity of opinion (Greenwood et al, 1976, p. 22)

On the councillor side, although there are some authorities where the policy committee assumes a 'coordinating role', and there are others where it assumes a corporate and 'interventionist' role, the 'largest group of local authorities' has a policy committee which assumes a 'commenting' role where the locus of policy-making is still within the service committee. These views have been authenticated by Stewart (1975) who identifies a danger in that management teams see their role not as the setting of a framework, but the consideration of all the authorities' activities. He describes vividly how the processes of corporate management are drowning in seas of paper, policy and resources committees battle with endless agendas, management teams become another committee through which new proposals have to struggle and inter-disciplinary groups proliferate, and there is a danger that all activities are dealt

with by corporate management.

Another problem which is still hindering efficiency in both countries, although to a lesser extent in Britain, is corruption. The Royal Commission on Standards in Public Life (1976) found that of the 179 people, excluding police officers, convicted of offences under the Prevention of Corruption Acts, there were 14 local authority members and 70 local government officers. In Nigeria, the New Nigerian (5 January 1979) spoke of the "corruption and wanton financial mismanagement that characterized the local government councils so far investigated".

Thus, Norton concludes that the reform in England and Wales has brought little progress in terms of efficiency:

The changes led to a heavy strain on resources. Workloads expanded dramatically, a heavy loss of staff could not be made up economically by recruitment, and new standards and new establishments tended to be set at more generous levels. Competition among authorities for the rarer categories of staff was expensive. Staff commissions set up with an oversight on staff matters had only a marginal effect on the inflationary tendencies of such a period, concerned as they were more with protection of staff interests than with economy (Norton, 1980, pp. 273-4).

The reform in Nigeria has brought little or no improvements in the internal administration of the councils. The new system is designed to equip local government everywhere professionally and financially for its task, but as we have tried to show so far in this chapter, it has been one big mirage. Finance, equipment and qualified personnel are in short supply. Money is unavailable because tax collection is poorly organized or, more importantly, as local government becomes more dependent on the centre for revenue allocations, higher levels of government fail to deliver promised grants on time. Staff are in short supply. A few examples from Anambra State will serve to illustrate the problem. Ihiala in 1979 had one social welfare officer for a population estimated at 203,339. Anambra local government had two community health assistants and three health orderlies for nearly 300,000 people. Igbo-Ekiti had 233 teachers and the same number of auxiliaries for its primary schools.

Elsewhere the problems are just as great. Zaria cannot maintain its roads or dispose of the growing amount of refuse created by a growing urban population. In Bornu State the present provision for primary education can only cater for 15 per cent of the school age population and another 70,000 classes are needed (West African, 7 January 1980). Most authorities experience difficulties in organizing revenue collection. Implementation is often further impeded by maladministration. These factors are an important qualification to the picture we have of service provision by Nigerian local authorities.

Considerable anxiety has always been shown about the high proportions of local revenues which are spent on personal emoluments rather than projects. Such expenditure has often consumed half the budgets of local authorities in the north, for example. This matter should be dealt with cautiously. Local government services are often labour intensive, especially in the social welfare and educational fields. It should not be automatically assumed that because there is a high level of spending on salaries, wages, superannuation and so on that a service is necessarily unproductive. It may be difficult to measure the productivity of, say, teachers, but that is in the nature of the public good being provided. Much of the 'product' of local government will inevitably take the form of a service delivered by professionals direct to members of the public. The success of local government should not only be measured by miles of road built or number of boreholes drilled.

Of greater concern is the high proportion of expenditure devoted to administrative costs. Many of these have to be borne in support of particular services, but it must be remembered that the expenditure on services such as education, health and agriculture also includes the cost of administrators and clerical staff as well as teachers, health superintendents and agricultural officers. The new system of local



government does not appear to have reduced significantly the cost of administration than under the old system: over 22 per cent in 1979-80 (see Table 8.6) compared with the Western State where local authorities allocated 20.1 per cent of their budgets on administrative costs in 1965-66, and 16.4 per cent in 1966-67 (Western State, 1967, Tables 6 and 7). In the north, however, Kaduna's 17.7 per cent is an improvement on North Western's 22.4 per cent in 1971 (North Western State, 1971; North Central State, 1975), but the fact that in Bauchi the bulk of local budgets is devoted to administrative costs suggests little improvement in priorities there (Aliyu and Koehn, 1980). A certain amount of expenditure on new premises was perhaps inevitable in the period immediately

TABLE 8.6: DISTRIBUTION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING BETWEEN SERVICES  
1962 - 1980 (WESTERN REGION AND OGUN STATE)

|                    | WESTERN REGION 1962-3 |       | OGUN STATE 1979-80 |       |
|--------------------|-----------------------|-------|--------------------|-------|
|                    | £ '000                | %     | N '000             | %     |
| Administration     | 1,277.4               | 14.1  | 5.6                | 22.3  |
| Judicial           | 1,154.7 <sup>a</sup>  | 12.7  | 0.4                | 1.6   |
| Education          | 3,077.1               | 33.9  | 2.0                | 8.0   |
| Health             | 1,089.1               | 12.0  | 3.5                | 13.9  |
| Public Works       | 1,464.9               | 16.2  | 13.3               | 53.0  |
| Agriculture        | 237.6                 | 2.7   | 0.2 <sup>b</sup>   | 0.8   |
| Trade and Industry | 4.0                   | 0.1   | --                 | --    |
| Other              | 750.3                 | 8.3   | 0.1 <sup>c</sup>   | 0.4   |
| TOTAL              | 9,055.1               | 100.0 | 25.1               | 100.0 |

a Includes police and prisons

b Includes trade and industry

c Community development in Ogun State

Sources: Western State (1968); Ogun State Local Government Estimates  
1979-80

following the reorganization of local government, but it is doubtful whether much of the expenditure on staff quarters, guest houses, housing for

district heads, and council accommodation can be justified, especially when development objectives have been set for local government.

Two other problems are worth pointing out. First, it is rather surprising that the concept of corporate management is still unheard of in Nigeria at the tail end of the twentieth century. Second, just as there have been problems between state and local government officials, so also there is serious conflict within the councils themselves. The difficulty of drawing a line between policy and administration at the local level has become a source of friction. There have been numerous clashes between political functionaries (chairmen and supervisory councillors) and the chief executive (secretary to the local government). The political functionaries, who are full-time appointees, tend to interfere too often in the running of the local authorities. For example, a supervisory councillor for works in a local government in Bendel State was reported to have dismissed a road labourer without the knowledge of the chief executive. Yet the councillors were given no control over staff under the new system.

It is certainly difficult to see what significant improvements have been achieved by the reforms in Britain and Nigeria, especially the latter. Local authorities in Nigeria, however, have made some achievements in education and minor constructions such as motor parks and markets. In Britain, most of the authorities now have chief executives and all of them have management teams.

#### SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND NATIONAL STABILITY

In view of the emphasis placed in federal policy statements on the significance attached to local government as an agent of development it is surprising to note how expenditure on agriculture, trade, industry and public works such as roads, has declined to negligible proportions

in some states. Yet in 1968 a United Nations expert had noted North Central's N.A. expenditure in these fields standing at under 4 per cent, commenting that "high standards of social services can only be maintained if the wealth of the community is sufficient to maintain them; and to expand the former and ignore the development of the services which increase that wealth is to court financial disaster" (Smith, 1968, p. 2).

Assessing the position throughout the country a year or two later Adedeji and Rowland noted the relatively insignificant role which local government was playing in the development process compared with the states, and its 'poor performance' in areas relevant to the productive capacity of the local economy such as public works, agriculture, forestry and industrial development. Much capital expenditure was spent on replacements and minor repairs. The total budgetary picture for a state could be dominated by a single large authority such as Benin, Bornu or Ibadan, with others having no capital budgets at all. Significantly local government was not mentioned in the Second National Development Plan for 1970-74 (Adedeji and Rowland, 1972, p. 8).

Nevertheless, there were some states in which capital development projects were planned. Between 1969 and 1975 in Kaduna State for example local authorities budgeted over 7 million naira for development projects such as roads, wells, dams, forest improvements and plantations. The problem appears to have been one of implementation, since no authority in the state was able to complete even 50 per cent of its projects during the period.

The designers of the new system were aware of these shortcomings and clearly wished to see local government making a much greater contribution to the development effort. Education is clearly crucial to development, and here local government is playing its part. But in other fields there has been a move away from involvement in socio-economic development.

Indeed, it is not uncommon to find some local authorities spending more on the maintenance of traditional offices than on agriculture, trade and industry combined. Ogun State's 1.2 per cent of local budgets on community development does not suggest that local government is in the forefront of the development effort, and compares unfavourably with even the meagre 4.2 per cent spent on veterinary services, trade, industry, forestry and agriculture in the Western State in 1966-67. Nor does Anambra's 2.7 per cent on agriculture, though it is an improvement on the average performance in the Eastern Region in the mid-1960s (see Table 8.4). Also the local authorities have planned a considerable level of capital expenditure on markets which, if implemented, should make a contribution to development by encouraging trade. But the general picture does not support the assumption that local government is serving as a mechanism for socio-economic development, and it certainly cannot be inferred that the more local authorities there are the greater the level of development (New Nigerian, 15 December 1979).

The development role of local government is more clearly understood if it is seen as part of the provision of an infrastructure required by capitalist production and enterprise. Then the emphasis on the construction of markets, council offices, roads, and water supplies is more comprehensible. The role assigned to local government reflects the dominant ideology of the Nigerian political leadership. It is very characteristic of municipal government at a time of early capitalist development with a democratic ideology. It in part explains why 'development' at the local level is so often measured by the quantity of physical constructions completed, a habit which allows maternity centres to remain unequipped and classrooms to be used for storage space (New Nigerian, 22 February 1979). But more importantly the powers devolved to local government reflect the interests of those who control the state

level and the extent to which they are prepared to loosen control over important inputs provided by the government to a growing industrial, commercial and agricultural business class.

Budgets only reflect in part the priorities assigned by locally elected representatives to different local needs and interests. They also reflect the powers which the centre is prepared to devolve. They should also be seen in the context of varying levels of implementation and uncertainty stemming from fluctuations in the regularity of grant payments by higher levels of government. All these factors, only some of which are controlled by local authorities, mean that there will be different patterns of spending and service provision from one part of the country to another and from time to time even within a single authority. Local traditions will also have their impact on patterns of local government expenditure, traditions such as community development through voluntary donations and self-help by lineages and kinship groups. Communal effort releases local government for other objectives. It will also alter the pattern of state grant allocations. The role which such traditional or communal groups can play in local government will be the main theme of the next chapter, 'Recommendations'.

Thus, the role which local government is expected to play in socio-economic development and national stability is not only ill-defined, but it has also become impossible to achieve anything substantial in view of the problems we have analysed in this chapter. There is little to suggest that the recent reforms have increased local government's development capacity. In many parts of the country local authorities do little more than administer part of what has become an increasingly centralized educational service. Elsewhere, public works absorb the resources of local authorities, but much of the expenditure is on maintenance work of government buildings. In our survey we asked

administrative officers to evaluate the problems that hinder economic and social development in their local government areas. 26 per cent of them felt that one of the problems is lack of understanding of state government's goals for development at the local level. 6 per cent mentioned the loss of local administrative officers to state governments as one of the serious hindrances. The majority of those interviewed (54 per cent), however, said that lack of motivation and participation on the part of the citizens is the most acute problem. The remainder mentioned things like lack of cooperation of local authorities with the state government and political opposition to state government efforts. When we asked the administrative officers what they thought was the most effective way of instilling citizen participation in development, 64 per cent of them mentioned citizen's involvement in the planning stage. Only 18 per cent of them opted for education (adults and children) as the second most important way. Thus, there can hardly be any development if the people cannot participate. And until such a time when the Government restores the 'functional integrity' of local authorities and realises that local democracy in its various facets is an inevitable part of national democracy can local government play any positive role in enhancing socio-economic development and national stability.

## CHAPTER NINE

RECOMMENDATIONS

## INTRODUCTION

To raze the simplified conceptual structures erected by one's predecessors is not only a frolic for the young in spirit, but also a necessary step toward the discovery of truths that have eluded scholars in the past (Fesler, 1957, p.139).

Nowadays 'realists' in government talk more about the 'management' of problems than their solution. Therefore, if our recommendations help in the 'management' of the problems which we have identified then this research has been worthwhile. It is unlikely that any major reform of local government will take place in Britain in the next decade although there is talk of some 'organic change' which would abolish counties, and restore power to districts over education and social services (Organic Change in Local Government, 1979; Ashford, 1981, pp.192-94). The present structure in Nigeria is not likely to enjoy such a 'permanence' because every state government has promised to reform local government again. Whatever the case, however, there must be arrangements for adapting the present patterns to social, economic, demographic and technological changes and to change in the demands that both countries make on local government. Any approach to the reform of local government areas will require considerable insight into the area's probable future economic and social development in order that sufficient scope for development may be given to new units at the time of their creation. Since local government cannot be abstracted out of the society of which it is a part, participation and efficiency will be enhanced if the dynamics within the society or culture, such as the institution of age-set in Nigeria, are exploited (see

below). Restructuring of local government boundaries, therefore, should be oriented towards the future rather than the present; otherwise, they will soon prove inadequate for what is often considered to be their major role : social and economic development of their areas.

There is considerable merit in retaining a two-tier system in Britain, each tier having clear responsibilities, but incorporating a reasonable measure of flexibility in its application, and endeavouring at all times to secure the right balance between efficiency and democracy, recognising that these are frequently in conflict. We would advocate, however, that the local authorities should be smaller than at present constituted because if we take the most basic definition of democracy - that government acts in accordance with the wishes of citizens - then democracy is undeniably a diminishing function of scale. It may be impossible to take Mill's advice and make every town a municipal council (1968, p.350) but his insistence on the primacy of the urban entity ought to be the starting-point for any future reform and not the hypothetical requirements of the functions it happens to provide. We cannot emphasise too sharply that the essence of local government is that it should be local.

We must of necessity talk in highly generalised terms, but other things being equal, we may say that a small unit is likely to be more democratic than a larger unit for a number of reasons. First, because in small units representatives are more likely to be responsive to citizens' views; second, because a smaller unit makes it possible for citizens to participate in decision making; third, a smaller unit leads to a more favourable ratio of demo-



cratic representation since there will be less voters per elected representative; and fourthly, in smaller units there is a greater likelihood of political homogeneity among the citizenry, thus making possible more clear-cut majorities on issues and more popular control of leaders (Barry, 1974, p.497). People are no longer satisfied with just voting; they want to participate in decision making and take part in activities that directly affect them. We do accept the need for services to be performed efficiently and that this requires larger units of local authority. Perhaps the solution to these functionalist claims is to create an intermediate tier at the regional level between the centre and locality with powers and functions not dissimilar to those of the states in Nigeria or the United States of America. This would not necessarily distort the unitary system of government in Britain. Such an intermediate tier would head off the pursuit of ever-larger local government units, either for irrelevant motives like that of reducing the workload of central government, or to achieve some functional capacity that is either unattainable or should properly be the task of the intermediate tier. Furthermore, the need to make more accountable the growing number of non-departmental organisations that at present exist between central and local government justifies the creation of intermediate tiers. There may also be a need to establish an intermediate tier in response to Scottish and Welsh nationalism. Lastly, such an intermediate tier is likely to protect local government from further centralisation. This upper tier should be responsible for such activities as transport, planning, education, police and fire. District councils could be responsible for housing, social services, recreation, libraries and public health matters. To overcome the deficiencies at grass-

roots level and promote participation, neighbourhood councils could perform a valuable role by identifying local needs and having recognised links with the upper tiers of local government. In like manner there is a need for a state-like authority to co-ordinate matters affecting London as a whole. Certainly the Greater London Council is involved in far too many detailed issues which are better left to the London boroughs.

A wide-ranging reappraisal would also be needed to embrace not only the present local authorities and their areas and functions, but also central/local government relationships, finance and the ad hoc bodies such as water and health authorities. A serious attempt should be made to reduce central interference with local government and to widen the scope for local authority initiative and action to identify and satisfy local needs and aspirations. The independence of local authorities has been deeply undermined by their reliance on financial help from the central government. This problem would be reduced if the recommendations of the Layfield Committee are implemented since local councils would be free to make their own spending and taxing decisions. Certainly, local councils could not attain such financial autonomy without fresh taxing powers. To give them such independence, the Layfield Report proposed the introduction of a local income tax to replace part of the grant and to supplement rates. The target was to reduce grant from 65.5 per cent at least to 50 per cent; in fact, the Committee found that if the objective of grant were limited simply to equalisation, to compensate for disparities in resources and spending needs, then grant could fall to 40 per cent of local revenue (Committee of Inquiry into Local Government Finance, 1976, p.219). So the Layfield solution, which we agree

with, was that local income tax would take up the financing of the 25.5 per cent of local expenditure previously filled by grant, believing that "a greater measure of financial independence is essential if Local Authorities are not to be treated as agents of the Departments" (Chester, 1951, pp.30, 369).

The anxiety about declining councillor calibre goes beyond the personnel of government to deal with what the fundamental relationship is, and should be, between dominant interests and the interventions of the local representative bodies of the state. Re-organisation has long been seen as urgent because of an implicit conception of the necessity for dominant interests controlling local government more directly. Moreover, reform has held out the possibility that changing facets of the local government apparatus could actually achieve this result. A number of other issues are also involved. We are forced to consider the implications of universal suffrage and the rise of the Labour Party. We have to pay particular attention to the impact of state intervention and public expenditure on dominant interests. Finally, we must have regard to the constraints on that intervention - constraints that tend to manifest themselves in particular moments of economic, and therefore, political crisis, even though we must recognise that the problem of state intervention and public expenditure is built into the system. These points need to be taken into account in any future reform.

We have pointed out that the problem of local government in Nigeria is more attitudinal than structural. That is not to say that the present structure is perfect. Far from it. In fact, the local governments must have more taxing powers so that they can generate enough revenue to employ adequately qualified staff

and to reduce their over-dependence on central government grants. The local authorities need to tighten their taxation methods and improve the collection of taxes. This will help their finances and reduce central controls. But more importantly, there is an urgent need for the state and local government officials, especially the former, to change their attitudes. For me, as for Professor Langrod (1953), democracy implies, above all, the active presence of a kind of 'ethics', of a certain 'public spirit' which in particular involves respect for human rights and the rights of minorities, fair play, decent methods, tolerance, unselfishness and observing the rules of the game. The strengthening of democratic local government should be the aim of all patriotic politicians.

Apathy which is caused by alienation and ignorance will be reduced if the press are empowered to report on council proceedings. The press is invaluable to local government because it will improve the relationships between the electorate and their representatives on the one hand, and the local authorities and the state government on the other hand. Recent demands for more open local government are encouraging - and worth encouragement. Information should be made easily available to public, press, the mass media and especially the researcher or academics whose recommendations may prove invaluable to local government and the nation on the long run. There is an urgent need for local government information office, local public relations officers, council publication of documents analogous to the consultation and policy papers now commonly issued by state and federal governments as a preliminary to legislation, and many other new devices for encouraging genuine discussion between the electorate and their

representatives. There is also an urgent need to establish the office of the ombudsman so that citizen's grievances can be redressed impartially.

The establishment of a national body of local government officers, comparable to NALGO in Britain, will enhance efficiency and cooperation. Such a national body would encourage joint co-operation and reduce duplication and wastage, say, in building a dam to supply water to neighbouring towns instead of each authority building its own. That would also save money, energy, resources and allow more personnel to concentrate on the councils' other duties. The establishment of local government associations would give local government an added voice in national affairs since they would be able to speak with a single voice. More significantly, such an association would confront a potential governor who wants to gerrymander local authorities or who wants to punish a council for political reasons.

The efficiency and effectiveness of local government would be improved if some form of corporate management and management techniques such as PPBS, O. & M., network analysis, operational research, employment of private consultants, work study, cost-benefit analysis and the use of computers are introduced.

Fears used to be expressed that frustration would set in among local decision makers if an increase in their calibre was accompanied by a decrease in the significance of what they were empowered to do. One way of avoiding such frustration is to create institutions whose members do not expect to exercise any discretion. This is what the dissolution of elected bodies, and their replacement by agents of the centre, effectively does. However, this is likely to pass the frustration on to groups at the local level who are excluded from

even the opportunity to win office through democratic procedures. The functions devolved to local institutions cannot be disassociated from the autonomy with which powers once delegated can be exercised. When local government is returned to a representative and democratic basis, in line with the requirements of the constitution, some further thought will need to be given to whether its present role is consistent with the objectives originally laid down for it. In other words, it is not enough to give local authorities powers and functions on paper; they must be given the opportunity to perform those functions and exercise those powers if they must remain truly democratic.

The central problem here is to separate local government and state power in the consciousness of the political community. At the moment this is impossible. This is not because voters are likely to judge state governments by what happens at the local level and the decisions made by local authorities. That will always happen. It is rather that what happens at the local level in Nigeria is critical for the electoral success of individual state legislators, and perhaps even more importantly, for the returns which are made in gubernatorial elections.

What chance is there of local government not being used, as it so often has been in the past, as a means by which electoral support for candidates for state office can be manipulated? Only if local authorities are given a measure of autonomy and devolved powers which are free from discrimatory intervention by a central (state) government in pursuit of electoral advantage. Central controls will always be called for in any system of devolution. But the more these are used to discriminate against individual authorities the more difficult it will be to extricate local

government from the partisan inclinations of central politicians and make it a viable institution in its own right. Only when it becomes a working assumption that central control should be used for state government policy objectives and not electoral advantage can local government play any part in a democratic society (Smith and Owojaiye, 1981, p.217).

Giving local government tasks and discretion is only a necessary, not sufficient, condition of its viability as an institution for community self-government. Other conditions are obviously required, not least a guarantee of free and fair elections. But the devolution of real powers with a degree of discretion in the way they are used is an essential prerequisite for a local government system to show a degree of responsiveness to local political forces rather than be a mere tool in the hands of whoever wields power at the centre. Certainly the exploitation of the traditional institution of age-set (see below) will ameliorate things. It will elicit responsiveness and participation of the citizens, help to improve the power and image of local government and help increase efficiency by removing some of the burdens which are presently taxing the energy and resources of local government. The establishment or intensification of the idea of community councils or neighbourhood communities to handle community development projects is likely to achieve the same result in Britain since they bring out a strong sense of esprit de corps.

#### LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

We define community development as a movement designed to promote the voluntary participation of the people themselves in efforts to improve their level of living with as much reliance as

possible on their own initiative, self-help and mutual help, and make these more effective. With little to guide us in the literature and with little that is significant emerging from theorising on the subject, we have to turn to the reality of community development in practice to understand fully the aims (see, however, Green, 1974, pp.5-16; Smith, Lees and Topping, 1977, pp.237-272; Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, 1973). Somehow we have to examine the variety of experience which exists and, even though it may be impossible to devise a framework which would embrace all experience, we must nevertheless attempt to strike at the heart of the transaction in each case in order to discover those factors which are common to all.

#### The Objectives of Community Development

In reality the primary objective of community development is simply stated. It is to promote, sustain, support and maintain community action. It stands in relation to community action in very much the same way as education stands in relation to learning. We know for example that learning can take place without any form of educational process: we suspect that frequently a good deal of education takes place unaccompanied by a corresponding learning; and we know also that it is possible for an educational process to stimulate a mindless form of learning that we call rote-learning. In similar fashion community action can occur without the stimulation of community development. It is possible also for a highly sophisticated and lavishly supported community development programme to complete its scheme of work without ever having produced any form of real community action. And it is also true that it is possible to promote a mindless kind of community action



in which the energies and aspirations of participants are frittered away in activities which deviate them from their best interests. It is even possible to promote community action as an end in itself; it may very well be that there are occasions when it is both necessary and right to induce some kind of action as a therapeutic measure to restore strength or to allow raw social wounds to heal - a kind of communal basket - weaving. Valuable though this may be in certain circumstances it would not be community development.

Community development as the term itself suggests is concerned with development, with going forward towards defined goals, with purposeful activity aimed at real achievement. The aim of community development is community action which must promote democratic participation, increase self-determination, overcome alienation, resolve social problems through self-help and create a caring society. The ideal of community action which it seeks to promote is in respect of real problems about which there is genuine and deep concern in the community; it is in respect of problems which are competently analysed; it is aimed at realistic and realisable goals with the aid of appropriate strategies; it is moreover a community action which realistically takes into account the costs of action and weighs in the balance of its own interest the disadvantages of reaction against hoped for benefit.

At another level, the concept of community development is a reaction against the traditional forms of political organisation; against "ossified and unresponsive local government" (Green, 1974, p.5). More specifically it is a criticism of the representative system of government and the inability of political parties to make it work. We have tried throughout this thesis to prove that local government reform became necessary in Nigeria and Britain

not only because there have been political, economic, technological, cultural and social changes, but also because the social values of the citizens of both countries have changed. People are no longer satisfied with just voting during elections; they now want to partake of decision making and execution. People are no longer satisfied that the government-central or local - is providing services; they now demand that these services are performed efficiently and effectively. They no longer see the provision of services as a privilege; today they see it as a right. They no longer want a government that is paternalistic, hanging on their necks like an albatross.

There are three main differences between Nigeria and Britain in the type of community development action which we envisage will engender participatory democracy, reduce local government workload and thereby help improve its efficiency. In Britain it is urban oriented as against its rural base in Nigeria. In Britain it is an experiment; in Nigeria it is indigenous to the culture and therefore spontaneous. In Britain it was initiated by the Government; in Nigeria it is initiated by the people themselves. Because of these differences, we will be treating our recommendations for the two countries separately.

#### Britain

Since the Second World War local government has not actively involved many people in more than once-yearly voting. Few people attend council meetings. Few attend ward party meetings. Few attend election meetings. Yet the system continues. Many people have found the organisation of local political parties (especially Labour) ineffective either as a forum for debate about local issues

which vitally affect them, or, ultimately, as a means of controlling their outcome. My central proposition is that the newer forms of participatory democracy embraced by community groups are a reaction against old and incapable political institutions. It is an essentially political interpretation of cause and effect. First, residents are prepared to engage in public debate - prepared to discuss their private interest openly and merge it with collective action. Second, more importantly, the representative system which relies so heavily on the principle of aggregate is particularly vulnerable when dealing with issues which have a spatial component, something unique to a particular area at a particular time.

Whereas education or health policy can be reduced to a set of procedures or rules which are applied in every town or city, planning policy depends so much upon what is on the ground. In order to be successful, to satisfy resident priorities, it cannot rely on aggregate political principles but instead requires local debate and locally sensitive solutions.

In short, participatory politics are increasingly recognised as a counter to the insensitivity of a progressively centralised system of formal constitutional representation. Many politicians argued for some institutional form of neighbourhood politics to sustain grass-roots debate within the new and larger units of local government. Although voluntary organisations and community activities have been known in Britain for a long time, and was certainly given a boost in the late sixties and early seventies, there is every need to intensify them. The need is even more urgent now than ever before in the face of the present economic and therefore political crisis, and the wave of riots which the country is experiencing now. One of the brightest prospects for

the future health of many local services lies in the growing involvement of the citizens. The Committee on Local Authority and Allied Personal Social Services - the Seebohm Committee - (1968) had no doubt that the expansion of personal social services which it thought necessary, called for a huge increase in the involvement of neighbours in their community, however much was also needed from the local council and the state. It seems equally clear that the present system of national health, if it is to serve the patient and avoid the risk of clinical and bureaucratic inhumanity, needs even more support from unofficial volunteers than the old system had from 'Leagues of Friends' attached to scores of individual hospitals. It has become clear that the existence of representative institutions are not sufficient for democracy. If these institutions are to function well, "socialisation, or 'social training', for democracy must take place in other spheres in order that the necessary individual attitudes and psychological qualities can be developed. This development takes place through the process of participation" (Pateman, 1974, p.42). Therefore, since the 'participatory value' of modern local government is 'an important element in a modern democracy', populist democracy needs to be intensified at the local level (Sharpe, 1970, p.174).

Following the Seebohm Report, most social service departments have delegated day-to-day responsibilities to a number of teams with a defined catchment area. In the Coventry and Liverpool Community Development Project Areas, many service agencies have joined together to provide their services from one building. The archetype for many, perhaps the ideal, is the Craigmillar Centre in Edinburgh which houses some combination of day nurseries, health visitors, home helps, rent collectors, citizens' advice

bureau, nuns, doctors and general practitioners, probation officers, marriage guidance councillors, the RSPCC, the DHSS, an employment exchange, research facilities, community workers and social workers of various kinds (Green, 1974, p.15).

One obvious way in which non-councillors can participate in local government is through co-option. The involvement of groups in local decision making itself allows many ordinary citizens to participate in local democracy. Thus, in 1972, a total of 75 non-councillors were co-opted onto council committees and sub-committees in Bromley, the number swelling to over 170 when other 'official' committees were included. The vast majority of these co-opted members were not appointed on an individual basis, but rather as representatives of prominent local organisations. Thus, the 'populist' element in this direct participation is somewhat modified (Cousins, 1977, pp.41-2). Other forms of direct participation also exist. For example, local people in one ward of the London Borough of Lambeth physically transformed a council-owned site into a park and neighbourhood play area with the active encouragement of the council (Cousins, 1977, p.41). Such examples are still, however, comparatively few. Schemes have been devised by some council housing managers whereby council tenants would actually manage their own estates, with a committee of their own choice and an allocated budget. So far as I know, none of these schemes has been put into effect. Yet these are efforts worth reviving and intensifying.

The creation of small-scale, urban neighbourhood councils or community councils to undertake community development projects offer a number of opportunities. First, the whole issue of

decentralising control to the public, and of the ordinary person's ability to handle the responsibility of his own public decision-making, can be raised continually, so that people begin to see that, at least, they are not as incapable of responsible action as their exile from responsibility has led them to believe. The unresponsiveness of higher authorities to their efforts will show them the practical emptiness of community councils as they stand, leading them to demand more effective participation and change. Second, and to complement the first, internal self-help projects, although not likely to achieve immediate comprehensive improvements in the quality of life in working-class neighbourhoods, may in the long run, give people practical experience of self-reliance and their ability to create their own solutions to the problems they face, even if the larger ones still require a strategy of nationally co-ordinated campaign. After all, "any practical project that breaks down the dependence effect of a centralised, paternalistic and none too magnanimous welfare state will be a step away from spectating and alienation" (Clarke, 1977, p.138). Third, community councils would remove distance and other forms of barrier between the government and the governed and increase accessibility to local residents. Fourth, they would increase officials' awareness to resident needs so that they may respond more effectively. Fifth, successes enjoyed by community councils on apparently 'unimportant' issues may have feedbacks whose ramifications were totally unforeseen by the authorities. For example, community councils should be in a good position to keep track of test cases in such issues as condensation in council houses and flats, in other parts of

Britain. Such links and such capitalisation of successes may well create a spirit of optimism that will encourage activity throughout an active community council's area, and encourage other councils to follow suit. Lastly, such voluntary organisations would relieve local authorities of some of their burdens and therefore help to enhance their efficiency. We must add that these benefits are also applicable to Nigeria.

### Nigeria

As we said earlier on, community development or rural development as it is sometimes called in Nigeria (we will be using these two terms interchangeably) has three main features which differentiates it from that which we are recommending for Britain: it is rural-oriented since about 75 per cent of the Nigerian population is still categorised as rural both in the spatial and occupational connotations; it is indigenous to the culture and therefore spontaneous; and it is projected by the people rather than the government. That is not to say that the government-central or local- has not initiated some community development projects or that they have not offered technical and financial assistance to communities that have established development projects. Examples of such abound, although the government has not been very successful when they initiate them for people.

One outstanding feature of many developing countries is the magnitude of their internal disparities in the degree of socio-economic development. Of major importance are the contrasts between rural and urban areas. The rural areas in most parts of these countries generally exhibit great poverty, poor health

conditions and ignorance as a result of varying degrees of geographical, social and political isolation. In Nigeria, where over 75 per cent of the population live and work in the rural areas, the emphasis on spatial planning has for a long time been on urban areas rather than regional problems which will embrace rural areas. This has led to the relegation of the rural areas to the background in the spatial economy of the country (see Table 9.1). Although the Government recently made some attempts to help the rural areas, because of the increasing rural-urban migration and because of its recent philosophy of self-reliance and self-sufficiency in the production of agricultural commodities, there is relatively little attention paid to the spatial aspects of rural or community development. Economic development takes place in 'space'. Yet to be meaningful and successful, the spatial aspects of rural development planning should be a central element rather than a peripheral one as it is at present. We return to this point below (see 'Growth Pole Hypothesis').

TABLE 9.1

RURAL-URBAN ALLOCATIONS IN NIGERIA: 1975-80 DEVELOPMENT PLAN

| Sector                        | Rural         | Urban         |
|-------------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Roads                         | None          | N 118 million |
| Sewerage and Drainage Schemes | None          | N 102 million |
| Water Supply                  | N 496 million | N 412 million |

Source : Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1975, pp.424, 408.

The first objective of the 1976 reform was "to make appropriate services and development activities responsive to



local wishes and initiatives by devolving and delegating them to local representative bodies" (Guidelines, 1976, p.1). Thus, an important reason for the reform was to develop more effective popular participation in local affairs, including activities of the central government that are carried out locally. Or as the Guidelines (1976, p.1) put it, the reformed local authorities are to perform duties which need local responsiveness and understanding. Such participation, according to the Government, not only enhances the dignity of the individual and the sense of community at all levels, but also adds vitality to governmental programmes and provides a means for local control over them. It makes the programmes more responsive and better adapted to local needs. Moreover, through participation, members of the community may be induced to do more on their own initiative and to make a fuller contribution to government programmes. This amounted to fine political rhetoric which was hardly matched by public investment and performance in the rural sector. The emphasis which the Government placed on participation and local initiative in the Guidelines was not transformed into action because of the implicit preoccupation of the Government with transferring a Western model of local government to Nigeria. Yet, the mere fact that a type of local organisational pattern has been used 'successfully' in one country does not necessarily mean that it will be equally successful under different circumstances. It is this belief that leads us to recommend the integration of our socio-political structure, in this case the age-set, into the system of local government. Innovation must be coupled with experimentation and critical evaluation. Such fresh approach as we are proposing

should go hand in hand with the modernisation of technical, fiscal and personnel procedures which we have recommended, to help the traditional units meet the emerging problems more effectively.

An important facet of local mentality and attitudes is virtually important and neglect of it has been the cause of many a disappointment in foreign aid and central government projects. This is that whatever is done to improve the lot of the rural poor should reflect what they want, or have been successfully persuaded to want. Moreover, they should feel that whatever is created is theirs to use, to maintain and eventually, where necessary, to replace or enlarge. If the foreigner (either the central government or country giving the aid) gives only what he thinks is necessary, in the way he thinks is best, he will be able to count on little if any self-help on the part of the beneficiaries and will have to pay the full price for any local effort he must mobilise to carry out his projects, the remnant of which, once he is gone, risk being left to fall into disuse. The rural poor must feel that whatever is being done in their locality is their idea, their effort (with help they choose to accept from outsiders), for their benefit, to build their future and that of their children. Basic services such as good elementary schools and adequate roads from farms to market towns are indispensable prerequisites to economic development, and such services can only be provided in adequate measure when local people have the power to tax themselves to pay for their own basic services. The importance of local participation is evident in the results from my questionnaire. I asked people, "How practical and effective do you consider the suggestion that community development plans should start, like the Macpherson Constitution, with a discussion at all levels of the society in order to arouse the enthusiasm and participation of the citizens?" 62 per cent of my respondents feel that it is not only practicable, admirable and desirable, but that greater effectiveness would be achieved

if local people are involved in the initiation and execution of development projects in their areas. In a separate question, about 74 per cent of the administrative officers whom I interviewed feel that the local communities in the areas where they are serving or have recently served are involved in development projects designed and carried out by the citizens, and it has meant more effective planning. My survey also shows the people have 'little enthusiasm' or interest in community development projects initiated for them by the Government. I feel that such community development efforts should be intensified and the only effective way is to make use of our traditional institutions, especially the age-set concept.

We are not advocating that the age-set system should replace local government, but that it should be exploited by integrating it into the new system of local government. Some measure of correspondence has to be found between local government and the mechanics of age-set. Our recommendation takes the form of a synthesis of the substratum and the superstratum, that is, of tradition and modernity, a wedding of the traditional institution of age-set and the modern quintessence of local government. Local authorities will have three main functions to perform in this synthesis: it will be the organ of co-ordination between various administration departments and agencies at the level which is closest to community development projects; it will be a source of resources - technical, financial, etc. - insofar as it pays part of the capital costs of projects and part of the recurrent expenditure where necessary; and thirdly, the local authority will be an agent of extension insofar as it is a channel of ideas both ways, between itself and its public. These propositions may seem bold, broad and may be even vulnerable, but they are nonetheless valuable. Public administration is a science which must always be open to suggestions which may be productive of knowledge. Scientists speculate and guess, they are

intuitive, all of which is part of the 'context of discovery'.

After all, wisdom does not come to him who gazes at nature with an empty head.

#### THE AGE-SET SYSTEM

An important aspect of African culture is the concept of age-set, sometimes referred to as age grade or age group . They are known in different parts of Africa by different names: it is known as gada in southern Ethiopia (Stewart, 1977, p.16); it is called lixula among the Tiriki tribe of western Kenya (Sangree, 1965, p.46); the Afikpo people of south eastern Nigeria call it ekpe (Ottenberg, 1965, p.16); it is known as egbe among the Yoruba tribe of western Nigeria (Lloyd, 1965<sup>A</sup>, p.563); and the Tiv people of northern Nigeria call it kwagh (Bohannon, 1965, p.535). Though age-set systems are described in some ethnographies (see, for example, Gulliver, 1963; Rivers, 1968, pp.136-8; Evans-Pritchard, 1940; Jones, 1962, pp.191-210), a few of them mentioning their significance in tribal societies in Africa, no writer has exhaustively dealt with this concept in its essentiality, vis-a-vis community development and local government. This may be due to the fact that the few ethnographers and social anthropologists who have mentioned this concept but who have not delved into its socio-political significance, are foreigners who are unable to understand its intrinsic importance. These anthropologists can be excused for not relating it to rural community development and local government since this is outside their area of study. We will therefore look into the concept to see how it pervades the idea of communality and how it can be used to lessen the burdens of local government, and of course central government, by bringing about rural community development.

Probably most cultures in the world have linguistic categories into which they classify people according to age and position in the life

cycle: boys, youths, middle-aged men, the elderly, or some such series of descriptive terms. In Africa, the list usually runs something like this: newly born infant, child on the lap, uninitiated boy, initiated bachelor, married man, elder, retired elder. Shakespeare, it will be recalled, reported eight such stages. Each of these descriptive terms represents a stage or position recognised by the culture. The people in that position - who play the roles implied - represent a category in the total population. These categories are usually referred to as 'age-sets'. Thus, age-sets are recognised divisions of the life of an individual as he passes from infancy to old age, that is, from infant, boy, youth, young married man, elder, and retired elder. The total range of age-defined roles may constitute a graded system, which emphasises the progressive movement from role to role, that is, from set to set, and prescribes the relationships between people in different sets. There is usually a specific time for moving from a younger set to an older one, often ritually established, or at least marked by 'rites de passage'. In this case there is a periodic achievement of increasing seniority. Persons of junior status must give respect and some degree of obedience to those of more senior status; conversely, the seniors expect deference but must also acknowledge obligations to assist, teach, test, or lead their juniors.

As we said above, age-set institutions are very prevalent in Nigeria. I shall, however, use the example of age-set in my local government area, where it is called are, to describe its characteristics. Among the Yagba people of Oyi Local Government in Kwara State, the are is a socio-political organisation which is divided into six stages (see Table 9.2), each stage marked by ritual ceremonies. The age-sets pass through these formal stages together by cooperative ceremonies at the tribal level. It normally takes nine years before an age-set can graduate to the set above it.

TABLE 9.2: AGE-SET STRUCTURE AMONG THE YAGBA TRIBE OF KWARA STATE, NIGERIA

| Names of Age-Sets | Age of Members | Duties of Members                    |
|-------------------|----------------|--------------------------------------|
| Ijoye             | Above 55 years | Judges, priests, diviners, etc.      |
| Iba Erun          | 45-55 years    | Diplomats, etc.                      |
| Omo Logun         | 35-45 years    | Warriors, etc.                       |
| Iba Eta           | 25-35 years    | Policemen, warriors, etc.            |
| Alarin            | 15-25 years    | Heavy building labour and work etc.  |
| Are Mode          | 5-15 years     | Tidy up market places & public halls |

The first stage, Are Mode, have no part to play in community decisions. Their role is to tidy up market places and public halls, hoe roads from farms to market towns, and act as 'servants' to the older members of the community. Theirs is a wholly pre-adult status. The second stage, Alarin, share with the Are Mode heavy building labour and work on roads and paths. In wartime they are expected to help the Iba Eta who are the warriors. Members of this third set are not regarded as mature enough to participate fully in ritual or politico-jural affairs nor knowledgeable enough to be of consequence in them. They may attend clan or community assemblies but even their spokesmen remain quiet unless specifically required to represent the interests of their age-set. They undertake 'police' duties and tasks requiring some discretion such as carrying an important message, on the order of the elders. The Omo Logun are the experienced warriors and they are expected to lead their infantry in wartime. In peace time, they drum and sing the younger sets into a state of ecstasy and frenzy during communal activities. They participate fully in all ritual and politico-jural affairs. Their spokesmen convene and administer community assemblies, and in consultation with age-mates, facilitate the approach to decisions on matters in discussion or dispute. The Omo Logun are fast learning Yagba custom, ritual procedures, ceremonial conventions, judicial techniques and details of past precedents. They no longer undertake the heavier labouring tasks. Members of the fifth set,

Iba Erun, are the repositories of experience, knowledgeable of past affairs and specialists in the diplomacy essential to delicate matters. The last stage, the Ijoye, are the judges and jurors who settle local quarrels and disputes and impose fines. The more elderly among them are herbalists, fortune tellers and priests to oracles. They are acknowledged ritual experts and the most efficacious herbalists and diviners. When settling difficult disputes they sometimes appear as egwugwu or masked spirits to put the stamp of ancestral authority on the verdicts of the communal tribunal.

Thus, the following are the general characteristics of the age-set system: (a) There is a total ordering on the sets given by the order in which they begin recruiting. In other words, the sets begin recruiting one after another - it never happens that two (or more) sets begin recruiting simultaneously; (b) each set recruits members for a whole year after which recruitment ceases permanently; (c) no individual joins a set before the enrolment age; and any individual who has not yet joined a set, but who has reached this age, joins a set as soon as there is one which is recruiting members, usually nine years after the preceding set; (d) babies that are born just after the Are Mode have been initiated or who have not reached the age of enrolment at the time, will have to wait for at least nine years to get initiated into the next set; (e) all members of a set are automatically promoted to the next age-set after nine years; and (f) no individual is at any time a member of more than one set. Nowadays when a considerable number of people leave the community to seek employment in the towns and cities, their children have to be initiated in absentia, symbolically represented by a fly-whisk.

We should remember that the community which we are describing is a rural one, depending mainly on subsistence agriculture. Members of the community either work on family/clan farms or they are self-

employed farmers. It is therefore relatively easy to fit in community duties around one's everyday work. The duties performed by members of an age-set are usually announced at least a fortnight before the occasion so that every one can plan ahead. For example, if a Bailey Bridge or a latrine was going to be constructed, the Alarin would be told of the day or days of the month when they have to leave their farms and go and work on the building of the bridge or latrine. Nowadays when some members of an age-set are, for example, nurses in the dispensary or are in salaried employment, they have to pay a levied amount of money as a substitute if their work does not permit performance of the community duty. This does not preclude the fact that such employed persons may still willingly contribute their labour when they are free, say, on Saturdays. This also applies to the community's 'sons abroad' (see below) who not only contribute money, usually a fixed percentage of one's salary, but will be required to contribute their labour when they visit the community, even if it is no more than a symbolic gesture.

Thus, in my local government, as in other parts of Nigeria, the social system and the social tradition are favourable to community development. Age-sets are still a force in society, and impose on everyone an obligation to contribute money or labour for community improvements. Equally relevant are the 'tribal improvement unions' which have grown up during the last 30 or 40 years as a result of emigration to the cities. 'Sons abroad' have formed their 'expatriate' unions and have sent money home for development, thus stimulating age-sets in the communities themselves which have spent the money in useful and constructive ways, for instance, to build and equip a maternity centre or to employ midwives to staff it. The functions of these improvement unions or omo ibile as they are known, include : (a) General ethnic leadership, and the provision of help for their members in the cities who are in need and succour to those in distress; (b) the channelling



of communications between political representatives and the community; (c) the organisation of community development projects; and (d) the securing of patronage and community amenities. This favourable atmosphere has resulted in a great deal of valuable public work being executed. Audrey Smock (1971, pp.320-41), like Achebe's A Man of the People (1966), gives a detailed and interesting account of the political role of such ethnic unions among the Ibo-speaking people of eastern Nigeria.

With the help of the age-set institution, therefore, my town and the neighbouring villages, for instance, have achieved a lot. Over the last decade, we have successfully executed projects - pipe borne water supply, a town hall, a post office, two colleges, a modern market - worth over six million naira but actually spending about one and a half million naira because labour is offered free. The local magistrates court is not congested because minor cases are dealt with in the traditional way. With the current wave of armed robbery in Nigeria, the third age-set help the police in policing the community. Whereas a number of people evade taxes imposed by the central and local authorities, the community effectively taxes its people because they know who can pay what. Lastly, although corruption is very rampant in the public sector of Nigeria because the nation's wealth is regarded as a national cake to be 'chopped', no one dares embezzle a community's money because of the disgrace and social sanctions which such an act would incur to oneself and one's family. These are just some of the ways in which community action through the age-set institution have helped in reducing the burden on local government (Tables 9.3, 9.4 and 9.5 graphically portray the community development projects embarked upon by some other communities in Nigeria).

TABLE 9.3: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS IN IKWERE/ETCHE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, RIVERS STATE 1971-79

| Project                  | Total No. Completed | Total Number Nearing Completion |
|--------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------------|
| Town Halls               | 18                  | 15                              |
| Markets                  | 27                  | 7                               |
| Roads/Bridges            | 21                  | 2                               |
| Maternity/Health Clinics | 4                   | 4                               |
| Pit Wells                | 1                   | -                               |
| Embarkments              | 1                   | 1                               |
| Agricultural Extension   | 8                   | 3                               |
| Postal Agency            | 1                   | -                               |
| Industry                 | 1                   | -                               |
| TOTAL                    | 82                  | 32                              |

TABLE 9.4: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS EXECUTED BY THE PEOPLE OF EDU, KWARA STATE, 1977-8

| Project  | Total Cost(N) |
|--|---------------|
| Construction of 2 Dispensaries and purchase of equipment.              | 20,000        |
| Construction of Maternity centres and purchase of equipment            | 30,000        |
| Well-sinking and Rural Water Supply and purchase of equipment.         | 8,000         |
| Construction of Slaughter Slabs and Slaughter Houses                   | 10,000        |
| Construction of incinerators and purchase of waste disposal materials. | 8,000         |

Source: Kwara State of Nigeria, 1978, pp.32-33.

In short, 'voluntary' action at the village level is rooted in the age-set system, customs and communal ownership of lands, with sanctions, not unlike those available to local authorities, applied for failure of members to contribute their services. These traditional organisations, because they reach decisions on the basis of a wide consensus of the adult members of the community, are useful for introducing new ideas and practices (e.g. political education), effecting community improvements and associating the people with government programmes of technical services. In such cases, local leaders may need training for their new responsibilities, but if the customary form of organisation can be adapted to perform new functions, while continuing to perform important traditional ones, it may be an element

TABLE 9.5: NUMBER AND COST OF SELF-HELP PROJECTS IN KWARA STATE BY LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND BY SOURCES OF FUNDS 1972-76

| Local Government Area | Road Projects | Bridge Construction | Pipe Borne Water | Electricity | Town Hall | Post Office | Primary School | Secondary School | Maternity | Hospitals | Clinics & Health Centres | Public Latrines | Water Dam | Markets | Market Stalls | Culverts | Well sinking | Leprosy Clinics | Class Rooms | Others | Total Cost of Projects N | Contribution by Community N | Contribution by Government N |
|-----------------------|---------------|---------------------|------------------|-------------|-----------|-------------|----------------|------------------|-----------|-----------|--------------------------|-----------------|-----------|---------|---------------|----------|--------------|-----------------|-------------|--------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| BORGU                 | 45            | 7                   | -                | -           | 2         | -           | 4              | -                | -         | -         | 1                        | 2               | 4         | 4       | 4             | 4        | 19           | -               | 10          | 26     | 73227                    | 61444                       | 7,300                        |
| EDU                   | 9             | 6                   | -                | -           | -         | -           | -              | 1                | 1         | -         | -                        | -               | -         | -       | -             | 2        | -            | -               | 28          | 1      | 77538                    | 25938                       | 4,700                        |
| ASA                   | 27            | 4                   | -                | -           | 1         | 3           | 5              | -                | -         | -         | 1                        | -               | -         | -       | -             | 13       | -            | -               | 8           | -      | 171650                   | 141005                      | 22,100                       |
| ILORIN                | 4             | 32                  | -                | -           | 2         | 3           | 2              | 1                | 3         | -         | -                        | -               | -         | -       | -             | 20       | -            | -               | 49          | 1      | 1023226                  | 1014276                     | 4,350                        |
| MORO                  | 41            | -                   | 1                | -           | 7         | 1           | 3              | -                | -         | -         | -                        | -               | -         | -       | 15            | 4        | -            | -               | 19          | 2      | 280590                   | 264290                      | 6,300                        |
| IFELODUN              | 11            | 6                   | -                | 3           | 1         | 2           | -              | 2                | 5         | -         | -                        | -               | 2         | -       | 1             | 2        | -            | -               | 46          | 2      | 3410453                  | 3403425                     | 8,208                        |
| IREPODUN              | 3             | 6                   | -                | 1           | -         | -           | 2              | 2                | 2         | -         | -                        | 1               | -         | -       | -             | 2        | -            | -               | 9           | 1      | 301989                   | 289474                      | 21,515                       |
| KOGI                  | 15            | 15                  | 1                | -           | 1         | -           | 10             | -                | -         | -         | -                        | -               | 5         | -       | 1             | 6        | -            | -               | 23          | -      | 191650                   | 141890                      | 22,888                       |
| OKEHI                 | 11            | 4                   | -                | -           | -         | 2           | -              | 3                | 2         | -         | -                        | -               | -         | -       | -             | 1        | -            | -               | 16          | -      | 152400                   | 132102                      | 11,700                       |
| OKENE                 | 11            | 10                  | 5                | -           | -         | -           | 3              | 3                | 5         | -         | -                        | 2               | -         | -       | 2             | 6        | -            | -               | 22          | -      | 251558                   | 229050                      | 11,998                       |
| OYI                   | 4             | 11                  | 3                | -           | 3         | 4           | 21             | 9                | 3         | 3         | 1                        | 2               | 1         | 2       | 4             | 11       | 2            | -               | 55          | 5      | 888140                   | 674208                      | 113480                       |
| OYUN                  | 15            | 3                   | 1                | -           | -         | 2           | 2              | -                | -         | -         | -                        | 2               | 1         | -       | -             | 4        | 2            | -               | 12          | 2      | 221838                   | 211238                      | 10,600                       |

Source : Kwara State of Nigeria, 1976, p.20

of strength in the national structure and merits treatment accordingly. As the late Prime Minister of Nigeria, Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, puts it,

to the villager there can be no meaning, no significance in national plans and policies unless someone can translate them into actual examples locally. Local government should assure popular endorsement of policy and its execution so that public support and effective authority converge (cited in Weatherhead, 1963, p.167).

Community efforts, with central and local government support, are needed to continue to raise a balanced country-wide prosperity, to meet the rising expectation, and to alleviate the frustration and dissension that can and has threatened national unity. For when a community builds a new school or a feeder-road, it often serves as a stimulus for neighbouring ones to do likewise; when the central or local government does so it can serve as a source of resentment that a neighbouring area was more favoured. In this way community development projects, with the support of the government will reduce rather than accentuate sectional tensions, and alleviate the strains on national unity.

It is important that we recommend the integration of the age-set concept into the present system of local government because the characteristic pattern of development in Nigeria is lopsided and urban-oriented (see Table 9.1). We shall also take a stand on the need for change in the existing pattern of policy, and, in the process indicate some of the highly desirable advantages that we believe will flow from the direction of change. We shall use the 'growth pole' hypothesis to prove the need for the creation of more town councils which will act as foci of development and we shall also prove that a meaningful and rational attempt at national development and modernisation should embrace the aim to arouse and mobilise the zeal of the local/rural communities (via age-set institutions) for self-betterment so that they will eventually acquire the ability to make a significant contribution

to the aggregate level of progress achieved by the whole nation of which they are integral parts. This latter purpose is graphically portrayed in this expression that focuses the basic need of eliciting "the increased participation from the periphery of the social order inward to the core", and accents the fact that "it is the directional flow of this participation which is the key to the movement" (Braibanti, 1969, p.98). This we shall call the 'Diaspora' hypothesis, which is not diametrically opposed to but rather complementary to the 'growth pole' hypothesis. It helps to bare the root of the matter in community development and to draw a sharp conceptual line of distinction between our approach which seeks to trigger development from the grassroots, using mass participation which is traditionally achieved through the age-set institution, and those approaches seeking to foster development from the top down. Of course the age-set institution has to be adapted to meet the modern age and needs. Not only will the aim of community development be defeated, but also it may not be technologically and administratively feasible, if each village has to execute, say, a pipe-borne water project. The solution to this problem is a consciously formulated, systematic, multi-sectoral programme to attain the integration of the people in the rural areas. In order to fully harness the potentials of the age-set institution, it will be necessary for the state and/or local authorities to delegate some powers and functions to the small towns which will form the developmental foci of the satellite rural villages around them. These towns we refer to as growth pole centres.

#### GROWTH POLE STRATEGY: A SUGGESTED COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT APPROACH FOR NIGERIA.

The growth pole hypothesis was first outlined by Perroux in an attempt to understand the mechanism whereby developmental impulses are

transmitted throughout a whole economy. According to him, growth poles are foci or centres in abstract economic space "from which centrifugal forces emanate and to which centripetal forces are attracted. Each centre being a centre of attraction and repulsion, has its proper field, which is set in the fields of other centres" (1950, p.95). Rather than allow our present geographical delimitations to cause territorial hostility in this era when we should be devaluing such frontiers, we should harness it for its economic and human resources which will delocalise not only the "progress of our technique, but also the progress of our scientific conception of the world" (Perroux, 1950, p.96). Thus, according to Boudeville, a growth pole can be described as "a geographical agglomeration of activities rather than as a complex system of sectors different from the national matrix ... (they) appear as towns possessing a complex of propulsive industries" (1966, p.112).

For a growth pole to have a beneficial effect on development, it must not simply bring about proportional increments in all the component units of the economy, that is, achieve mere growth in volume and magnitude. It must occasion substantial increments differing in size in the component units as a result of significant structural transformations in all dimensions - economic, social and institutional.

Diaspora, which is complementary to growth pole, is also here defined as spread effect, an expansionary momentum generated from a centre of economic growth and directed towards other regions, resulting in a substantial and sustained increase in demand, incomes, investment, production and overall development. Our strategy is based essentially on the idea that through concentrating investment capacity in a rural town which forms the focus of the satellite villages around it, expansionary momentum can be generated in the economy of its region.

Our model begins by assuming the existence of a rural town surrounded by a large rural landscape in a certain part of Nigeria. Scattered throughout the rural landscape are numerous small villages supported primarily by a subsistence agriculture although some people may be involved in cash crop production and small scale cottage industries. Each of the villages is primarily self-centred; extent of the village influence on the landscape is established by prevailing modes of movement which in many cases may not be of more than 10 kilometres radius. Within this space village dwellers live and outside contacts are few and infrequent. Relations between the primary centre and the rural settlements are weak and at more distant points non-existent.

Required to initiate an integrated rural development in such a model of rural economic space is the introduction of new factors that will promote change and encourage innovation. For instance, an effort could be made to introduce new and suitable cash crops that will provide the economic base of the rural area. Special attention could be given to technical assistance, access to sources of agricultural credit and an agricultural bias to education. Whatever help is offered, however, the villager must be left to carry out his duties within his custom, again, using the age-set institution in this case. These changes in the rural economic base can only be effected if the inertia characteristic of the existing spatial patterns in the rural areas is overcome. Thus there is need to evolve new and different spatial arrangements such as the integrated system we suggested earlier and which is elaborated below. In this way market towns will emerge in various parts of the rural landscape.

#### Growth Poles as Instruments of Integration

A clear distinction must be made between historic growth poles such as Kano and Ilorin, which have emerged spontaneously as a manifestation of the process of polarisation and concentration of economic

development, and planned growth poles such as New Bussa, deliberately implanted or dynamised in the periphery as an instrument of regional policy. In the latter case implantation of the pole is usually achieved on the basis of an 'industrial complex' located in the vicinity of a relatively large rural centre already in existence or purposely created; this industrial complex is formed by a highly dynamic 'propulsive industry' and by industries of induced growth integrated vertically or horizontally with the former and situated near it. Moreover, existence of the complex also induces a series of supplementary activities which serve both the industries and inhabitants of the pole.

Use of the growth pole concept as an instrument of regional policy consists, in fact, of the planned activation of the hypothetical process of spontaneous diffusion of development from the historic pole to the peripheral areas, a process which has been scarcely effective in Nigeria. The impact of the growth pole on the economic development of its periphery may be visualised in terms of diffusion processes, by which economic development spreads to the periphery as a consequence, on the one hand, of communication and human interaction in general and, on the other hand, of the demand in the pole for the raw materials, semi-manufactured inputs or manufactured goods the periphery can provide. This induces the corresponding mining, agricultural and possibly manufacturing activities and determines a degree of dynamism in the periphery and increasing integration of local economies in the national economy represented by the growth pole.

The idea of deliberately implanting new growth poles in the periphery derives from the premise that this process of diffusion can be induced, accelerated and given greater territorial scope. The very fact of implanting a new planned pole, which is to act as a new focus for the concentration of activities, already



implies a measure of deconcentration with respect to the historic pole and, through economic interdependence and mutual interaction, should represent a step in the integration of the national space-economy.

It is therefore important that a well-conceived strategy of polarised local development should consider both the implementation of new growth poles in the periphery and, at the same time, additional action directed toward strengthening and restructuring the urban system in general and the networks which link it together. Some urban centres should be strengthened in their function as 'central places' and assigned a role as regional distribution and service centres with broad territorial influence. On the other hand, other small urban centres or large rural centres may be able to act as secondary centres of industrial growth and, therefore, of population concentration. The transport and communication networks will provide channels for exchange and interaction between the growth poles, the secondary growth centres, the regional service centres and the rest of the urban system, and their development will make these more accessible to one another. Together, these elements should make it possible to transmit the dynamizing and integrating impact of the growth poles to the periphery and, lastly, to the rural areas.

In the rural areas, villages have to be grouped together to form a 'Block' for planning purposes. Each block should comprise an area of about 150 square kilometres with a population of about 20,000. The block should be headed by a generalist development officer who will co-ordinate the activities of extension officers in the fields of agriculture, animal husbandary, health, rural or cottage industries, social education, co-operatives, etc. The focus of the integrated work at the block level should be the block plan. The block plan will comprise the village plans viewed as a whole and co-ordinated

in addition to development programmes for which the block is directly responsible. Basically it should cover a minimum programme in the fields of agriculture (including minor irrigation, soil conservation and animal husbandary), rural industries, development of co-operatives, elementary education, rural water supply and a programme of minimum rural amenities - including health, approach roads and so on.

The concept of the block as a unit of planning and development envisages the pooling of all development funds at that level, including not only the schematic budget, but departmental funds and local community effort. The block should act as the common agent for all departments in the field of development both for planning and implementation of programmes, and should help the villages to evolve technically sound plans which can be executed efficiently. We must realise, however, that unless the technical departments are brought squarely into the programme and the block developed as their common agency the objectives of the programme will not be realised. This brings to the fore the problem of co-ordination at the level of policy-making and at the level of execution in the field. This is where the local government has to exert its influence.

At the policy level local governments should set up co-ordination committees for the purpose of taking an integrated view of development programmes and taking decisions jointly. Certainly it is inconceivable that a local authority would be in a position to take over the running of all community development projects embarked upon or executed by the local people. Yet as we pointed out earlier, it can serve as a source of resentment that a neighbouring area was more favoured if the local government takes over the management of a community's projects while leaving others to run their own. The solution to these problems is an effective integration of policy and planning. The policy and co-ordination committee for community development

which we suggested earlier should be made up of leaders of communities (the Ijoye and the Iba Erun), the extension officers, local government officers, local government officials and the generalist development officer. In this way the local government would be able to know what projects are being planned by each community and would be able to offer technical advice as to the feasibility of such projects and how their costs can be reduced if two or more communities join hands to carry out the projects. A few examples from my local authority area will suffice to explain what I mean. In 1976, eight different villages within a radius of 12 kilometres to one another, wanted to establish a secondary school each. Then the government stepped in to tell them that although their projects were laudable, there was no way each village could command enough resources to establish and manage a secondary school. The government therefore advised that they should pool their efforts and establish a college in a central part of the eight villages so that no village could claim that it was located within its own boundary. Furthermore, the government promised that they would be helped financially and technically if they took its advice, and that the college would be run for them once the project was executed. The result today is the well-equipped Gbarraga Grammar School, the word Gbarraga being an acronym.

The role of the age-set system under our model will be to contribute its communal labour, organised along traditional methods. Thus, while the Ijoye and Iba Erun can be members of the policy and co-ordination committee, the Alarin will be working on the construction site, aided by the stimulus of traditional drumming and music by the Omo Logun.

Another example of the possible 'partnership' which our model advocates is in the realm of roads and buildings construction. In some cases roads and buildings have been built by the communities in

the first flush of enthusiasm only to fall into neglect, for it is more exciting to start something than to keep it going. It is here that local government comes into the picture. Local authorities are not always as good at taking the initiative as the age-sets, the improvement unions or the community as a whole, but they are better equipped, because of their statutory powers, to repair, maintain or extend what has been created by the work of enthusiasts.

In the field of agriculture, with the development of well distributed market towns for agricultural produce and other manufactured goods the farmer is free from the middlemen traders who habitually pay him a very poor price (Ajaegbu, 1972, p.105). With the existence of market towns in the rural areas it becomes possible to break down the apathy and indifference of a 'static', tradition-bound subsistence agriculture, substituting for it the incentive of profit and commercial exchange of agricultural commodities for consumer goods. With the appearance of market towns serving several villages, the traditional routines of rural life are modified and may be eventually replaced by new ones.

The spatial framework provided by the existence of market towns in relation to the village settlements should be used for planning the provision of other rural development projects; for every block there should be a growth centre, that is, the market town, and a number of peripheral villages. In order for the market towns to be effective in stimulating rural development it should be possible for farmers to move their produce hence roads and road improvement become necessary. As the market function of a market town develops, the new market town becomes a nucleus for a new form of population agglomeration which in turn attract other activities. Thus local administrative functions and other social services such as primary and secondary schools, health facilities, postal services and banking facilities can be attracted to the market towns. Furthermore, such towns could be

provided with public water supply, electricity and all-weather roads. Finally, the rural market towns will be most suitable for the development of rural cottage industries.

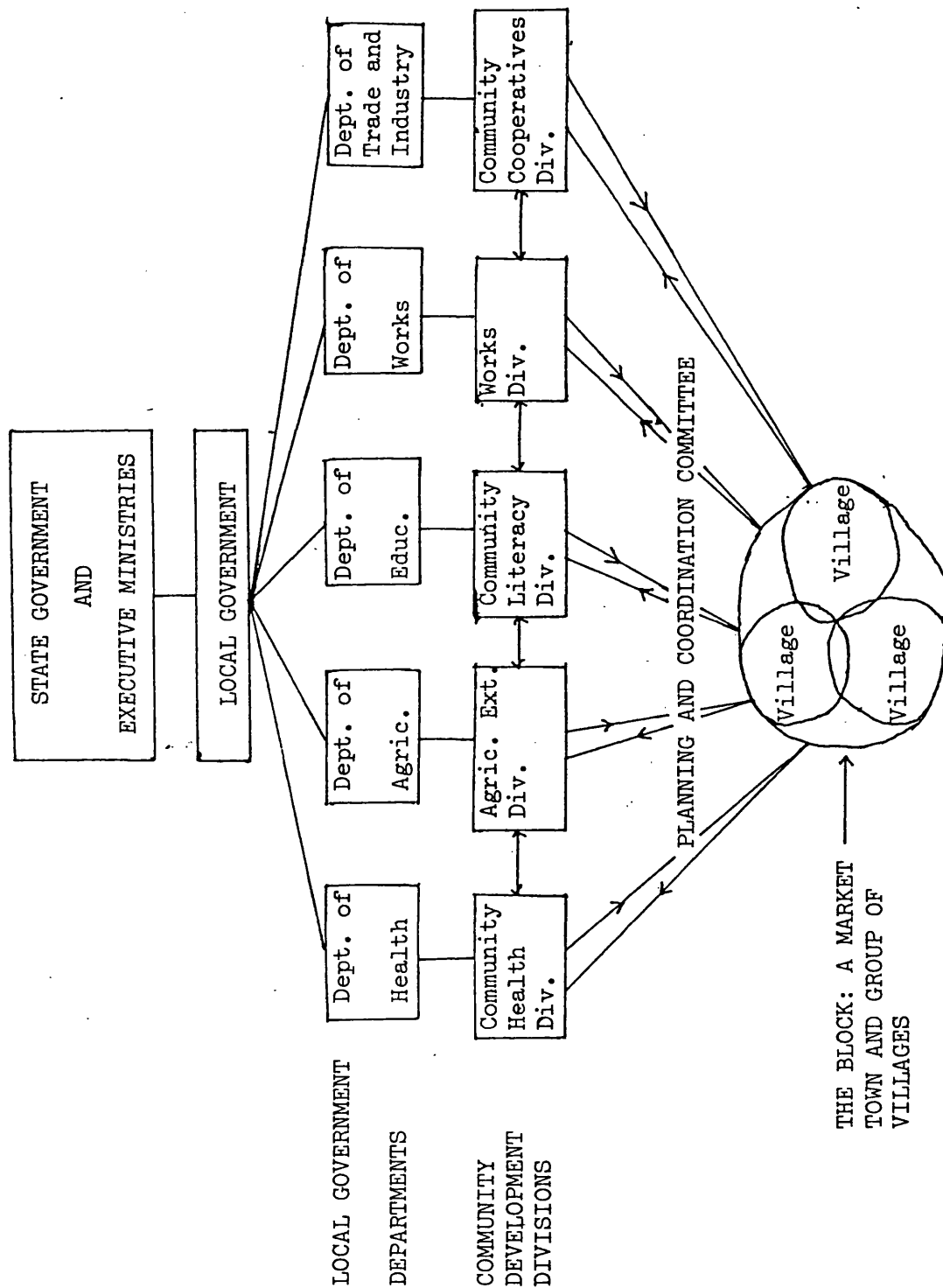
Another aspect of our model of integrated rural development in Nigeria relates to the integrated patterns of those ecological, sociological, economic and organisational variables which together create agricultural land use systems from one area to another. This aspect is concerned with the visible and tangible landscape patterns which have arisen from man's attempts to produce foodstuffs, agricultural raw materials for industry and livestock as well as the invisible but equally significant patterns of land use systems, for example tenurial arrangements, the spread of innovations in farm operations, farmers' organisations, credit facilities, levels of literacy among rural populations and many others. Furthermore, there are those vital aspects of mobility, of functional circulation, of movement of inputs and output which should be spatially examined and planned for in relation to the existing settlement pattern. Time and distance studies are also an integral component of the spatial aspect of rural development, for example, greater attention to location, shape, area distances and directions will aid the creation of more efficient farming practices. Simply stated, movement exacts a charge on the farmer and husbandman; the greater the distance and the more time-consuming the move, the heavier the charge on productivity, that is, a reduction in output or increased costs. The journey to work of the farmer, the propinquity or otherwise of markets, of sources of inputs such as improved seed, fertilizers, tools and machinery; of storage facilities, of extension staff and so forth, all affect the efficient functioning of the agricultural system in the rural areas in a most direct way. The role which local government will play in all these cannot be over-emphasised. It would be good, at least in the initial

stages, to leave the rural farmers to organize their labour along the traditional lines through the system of age-set whereby members of a set exchange ideas and seeds, and cooperate by setting aside some days to work together on one another's farms. This is a good starting point insofar as it is the revival or encouragement of an ancient traditional method of getting things done. Even the most academic theorists of community development would agree that the words mean nothing until something happens in the way of an improvement, and this is more often than not brought about by manual labour and cooperation. After all, the labour itself, and the feeling of achievement that goes with it, can generate a spirit that will lead to further improvements and to the emergence of leadership, initiative and pride; in other words to a real community.

Our strategy advocates a more cooperative and mutually sustaining relationship between the local government and the communities. The need for a democratic approach to development is here based on the premise that since people are the target of any development activity, their needs and values must be reconciled with the objectives of any development programme in order to secure their commitment to and identification with such programmes. Therefore, in order to ensure cooperation and effective direction and utilization of resources in local development, an adequate level of planning and consultation is imperative (see Figure 9.1).

It is very important that some leaders of the 'improvement unions' or 'sons abroad' be included in the planning and co-ordinating committee. Most of the 'sons abroad' go to their communities at least once every fortnight and they are very intimate with local developments. In Nigeria, most councillors are born and brought up within the council in which they are serving. Therefore they are not strangers to the dynamics of the age-set system and they will not object to some members

FIGURE 9.1 : A PROPOSED DECENTRALISED COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION SCHEME FOR NIGERIA



\*\* The arrows between the components of the model indicate cooperation, flow of information, and coordination, and feedback at all stages of the process - the essential guidewords being integration and team approach.

of the 'improvement unions' being included in such a committee, because (a) the local communities are likely to trust their educated sons more than they will trust any government agent; (b) since the major part of development funds come from the 'sons abroad', it is imperative that they have a say in how the funds should be used; (c) since most of the 'sons abroad' are, on average, more learned than the councillors, they (the former) are likely to understand the technical, legal and financial implications of joint ventures by the communities better than the councillors, and they would be able to put their views to the communities better than the councillors; (d) the 'sons abroad' are useful advisers to the village members of the age-set system and they would be an invaluable contact point between the village and the local government departments; and (e) since the 'sons abroad' are nearer the seat of state and federal government, say in Ilorin and Lagos, they are in a better position to secure patronage, technical advice and community amenities than the local councillors. For example, a block of classrooms was donated to the girls' college in my town by UNESCO, through the help of Chief Simoyan, an employee of UNESCO. Such donations will surely reduce the cost of development projects both to the communities and the local government.

Thus, the proper development of growth poles in Nigeria will have the effect of forcing on the policy-makers greater awareness of the need to modernize agriculture and improve conditions of living in rural areas. In a rapidly changing industrializing situation, the agricultural sector has a new type of demand pressure put on it. This is not only to provide surplus food to feed the urban residents but, more important, to produce enormous quantities of raw material which can be stored away to ensure that machines and other investments are utilized efficiently over a considerable period. To do this, the farmers will in the long run



have to become less subsistent and more commercial and specialist farm-managers. Such a transformation has implications for the type of inputs of seeds, fertilizers, equipment and other farming infrastructure which the farmer now considers appropriate. It also affects his idea of farm organization and what avenues of credit loans are available to him.

With the rural producers, achievement of increasing levels of production would involve the use of a 'stick and carrot' technique to ensure appropriate motivation. Whilst the need of the cities for food supplies and industrial raw material could serve as the stick driving the farmers to greater and greater production, their enthusiasm can be expected to wane if they do not find close-by appropriate goods and services on which to spend their increased income. And, as has been suggested earlier, a reappraisal of the distribution of existing market towns and/or the creation of new ones, and the types of goods and services they will provide for the rural masses is a vital and complimentary exercise for a growth pole strategy in Nigeria.

One interesting aspect of the rural dimension of growth pole planning is the way it forces attention on the role of frontier areas in national development. In Nigeria, this includes the Bamenda Cross River Basin, the Adamawa Highlands, the Hadeija - Yobe River Zone, and the Middle Belt, a well-watered expanse of land drained by the Niger and Benue rivers and suitable for the production of a wide range of crops such as rice, soya beans, benniseeds and sugar cane. It also has considerable fishing and tourist potentials.

For a growth pole strategy to succeed at the rural level, therefore, institutions must be created for the effective organization of the rural population for developmental purposes. The task of governmental agencies dealing with a myriad of atomistic production units must be so frustrating as to be self-defeating. The institution needed must have

as its primary objective the comprehensive organization of rural communities for development and must serve as the channel for all the relations of agencies of government with these communities. A successful process of 'incorporation' of marginated rural populations would not only mean an expansion of the internal market, but would at the same time improve the living standards of these populations, stem rural-urban migration, and bring about a process of social and cultural change and their gradual integration in the 'urban' patterns of life. Moreover, with surging feelings of confidence, efficacy and self-reliance widely and deeply infused into rural minds and institutions, the national mind and institutions may, in their turn, increasingly become the foci of affluent accession of identification, loyalty and supportive orientation in rural circles and populations. Furthermore, there is the possibility that the evolution of the type of policy of community development being espoused here may eventually help to lend institutions of local government the enviable criteria of stability and legitimacy they now lack.

## CONCLUSION

To usher in a viable system of community development, therefore, there needs to be a thorough-going and purposeful reappraisal of current policy in order to correct the aberrations that plague it and warp the functional perspective of government action programmes designed for community development. This implies that systematic steps be instituted to re-think the true nature and directions of those efforts that are appropriate to the task of vigorously and realistically attacking the roots of rural physical and mental degradation. Inescapably, part of the reassessment of aims and methods should include a keener appreciation of the constructive potentialities of projects resting on a base of intermediate technology and processes and the acquisition

of middle-level technical know-how. There should also be increasing manifestation of a firm conviction to invest more of available societal resources in meeting the challenge of rural animation. And, as the crowning step of this innovative refashioning, there should emerge a bolder and settled realization of the centrality of consultation with the wishes and desires of the local people and their spokesmen as well as their co-optation and participation in decisions about programmes and projects to be undertaken and their order of selection. Better still, the people should be allowed to decide on what projects they think they need, and receive help from whosoever suits them, with the government providing resources and technical assistance.

An innovative approach such as is being adumbrated here is likely to be rewarded with developments and changes with far-reaching impact in both the national and community spheres of activity. The curve of national output of goods and services will likely move upward because of the varieties of small-scale and cottage industries that might be called into being in rural locations and whose products will significantly add to the aggregate of national productive wealth. These include bakery, black-smithing, carving, carpentry, knitting, pottery, motor repairing, weaving, welding, and many of their ilk. This state of affairs will also increasingly be conducive to wholesome economic diversification. The varied resource-endowments of the rural areas will form a variegated base for underpinning multifarious local crafts and other productive forces thus lending a healthy heterogeneity to national economic growth. Knowledge of simple and intermediate technology and skills will become slowly but surely diffused through all strata and sections of the population. This will represent a modest spread of the technical milieu and calculated, over time, to breed in the behaviour and outlooks of the rural folks the beginnings of those

disciplined and rationalistic patterns of thought and action that are widely and highly regarded, as a vital psychodynamic dimension of modernization. More concretely, moreover, many types of employment opportunities will tend to develop in the village and community locations. This latter development will spell no small gain in a country suffering from a staggering burden of unemployment, underemployment and related socio-economic maladies.

Eventually, local exploitation and use of local resources for local processing industries will tend to burgeon and loom larger and larger in the national economic ken. At the moment, far too many of these raw materials that are known to exist remain untapped and unutilized because they are not directly needed by the sophisticated, high technology industries that are erroneously exclusively regarded as the sine qua non for economic development and as inherently urban-oriented. Through close and active involvement at the planning and take-off stages, and in the administration of these modest, small-scale enterprises, the local community leaders will have the opportunity to know the ropes with respect to basic secondary organizational capacities and entrepreneurial skills that are required through organic -, not mechanical-solidaristic activities. This again is a vital pre-condition of any serious design for the emergence of modern business aptitude and associational effectiveness at the level of the rank-and-file of the population.

The current tendency toward over-centralizing control of the various processes involved in community development in the hands of local agents of remote authorities, no matter how well-meaning, tactful, perceptive and sympathetic these may be, poses a serious hindrance to the realization of the desirable qualities of flexibility and equity in resource-allocations to various development sectors. For

only local leaders and representatives are capable of articulating the needs of their communities and communicating and representing them before the decision-makers with that degree of validity peculiarly vested in the sufferer. Flexibility in the present context connotes the basing of decisions on resource allocations on criteria that incorporate a balanced and hard-headed grasp of the nature and requirements of all the groups and sectors such that the justice of commensurate allocation proportioned to felt-need and relative import of each in the overall scheme of things developmental will redound to the centre and the periphery alike. A thriving order of community development relying on the principle of local consultation will help to make assurance doubly sure that the needs of communities are equitably considered and not neglected or submerged.

Planning must be a democratic social process aimed at the development of local initiative, local leadership, local functional groups and village organisations, keeping the community as the essential focus. It must be a problem-solving process aimed at the fullest utilization of local resources. It must be a meaningful process comprehensive enough to break through the interlocking vicious circle of underdevelopment and lead to a self-generating growth with increasing opportunities for higher levels of income, consumption and aspiration. Local planning, to be successful, must integrate the efforts of the people with those of the governmental agencies. Local planning cannot be isolated from national goals. It must, while satisfying local needs, be geared to the fulfilment of national priorities. Implicit in the whole process of planning is the growth of the community gaining enhanced ability to act together. The community becomes a centre of creativity in the larger community of the local, state and national government, and the broad aim of the administrative agencies or change agents is the promotion

of this creativity. Recruitment, training, organization, control, encouragement and supervision, technical support and guidance, financial and budgetary patterns, indeed the entire work complex and administrative outlook must subserve and strengthen this purpose. I cannot but say again that these propositions may seem bold, broad and may be even vulnerable, but they are nonetheless valuable.

## CHAPTER TEN

CONCLUSION

Today reform may be not only respectable but also desirable for the sake of the future (Caiden, 1970, p. 23).

In the previous chapters we have outlined the process of local administrative reform in Nigeria and Britain. All that remains to be done here is to recap the major themes which were treated in the thesis and further expatiate and elucidate the answers to the hypothetical questions we set ourselves in Chapter 1.

In Chapter 1 we said that a diagnosis should indicate the symptoms which have to be translated into a coherent picture on the basis of which action can be planned and carried out with a reasonable assurance that objectives will be achieved. We also mentioned a number of conditions which necessitate administrative reform. Most of these conditions were found in Nigeria and Britain. The existing local administration in both countries had failed to meet the demands put on them. The impact of growth took them by surprise and they could not keep up with the times (see Chapters 3 and 4). The pattern of human settlement was always ahead of the pattern of organization.

There were other conditions which necessitated a diagnosis and hence the reforms in both countries. The 1975 coup d'etat which brought Murtala to power provided an opportunity for a thorough reappraisal of local government. The effect of the military take-over on local government proves our hypothesis that local government is an organism which must respond to environmental and political changes. Furthermore, the large-scale overhaul which local government faced under the Murtala/Obasanjo regime corroborates what we said in Chapter 1: that major administrative reforms are usually the direct outcomes of very serious crisis conditions faced by a government, such as the take-over of power, through revolution or otherwise, by political groups who differ strongly

from those previously in office. And there is no doubt that the Murtala/Obasanjo regime was ideologically different from those previously in office (see Chapter 7). We also mentioned in Chapter 7 that the threat of public disturbance and the fact that some sections of the armed forces were known to be restive made the 1976 reform necessary. In Britain we discussed the rise of the Labour Party, universal suffrage and the effect of the Second World War as some of the conditions which necessitated reform (see Chapters 3 and 4). In Nigeria and Britain, poor economic performance and the need to rationalise government expenditure was also an important factor pushing for reform (see Chapters 3 and 5).

Furthermore, it became necessary to reform local government in both countries because the administrative systems were thought to be inefficient and ineffective. Corruption was very rampant in Nigeria. Other factors which we identified in Chapters 3 and 4 as responsible for structural and behavioural changes were the growth in the size and type of clientele served by local government; changes in problems and needs, and, therefore, in organizational programmes as to the proper responsibilities of local authorities; technological developments such as the motor car which enabled extensive movement of people and local government representatives; advancing knowledge in medicine, such as the discovery of quinine to cure malaria, which lowered the rate of mortality, thus leading to a population explosion and urbanization; the growing impact of party politics in local government and its implications; changing and usually rising qualifications of personnel, such as the rise of professionals in local administration. The social and economic changes which we analysed in Chapter 3 meant that local government has expanded its scope and therefore needed expert advice to tackle these complex problems. The late 1960s brought both an emphasis on efficiency



and management in public administration, and the emergence of new demands for local democracy, participation, community power and professional autonomy. All these changes, as we noted in Chapter 5, were taking place while the structure of local government remained relatively static.

The changes mentioned above have been accompanied by equally important developments in social thinking and public attitudes. One such development in Britain has been a new approach to unemployment and poverty. Social attitudes in the nineteenth century were very much bound up with the administration of the poor laws, founded on the belief that it was chiefly up to the individual to meet his own needs and find employment; public relief was discouraged by the principle of 'less eligibility' and the stigma of pauperism. Widespread unemployment caused by the depression of the 1880s and followed by the reports of the Royal Commission on the Poor Laws, which sat between 1905 and 1909, led to acceptance of the view that unemployment is more often the result of wider, impersonal forces over which the individual has little control and should be tackled by prevention, not deterrence.

The second aspect was the growing realisation that social ills - poverty, high death-rates, ill health, bad housing, unemployment and the plight of the destitute elderly - are interconnected. The social services of the twentieth century were developed to meet those needs and the movement was logically followed by the Seebohm Committee who recommended the unified administration of the local authority personal social services, to reflect the fact that families and individuals have needs which have to be looked at together and not dealt with in watertight compartments (Committee on Local Authority and Allied Personal Social Services, 1968).

Thirdly, there has been a great expansion of all governmental activities in Britain and Nigeria, especially in the social services,

accompanied by a change in the role of the central government. A wider distribution of the benefits of greater national wealth required the government to play a more positive role in order to eliminate poverty, to maximise welfare and achieve a greater degree of both economic and political equality. The assumption of this role has led to a great change in the whole concept of social policy embracing social security, health and welfare services, education and the improvement of the environment. In the local government field this has resulted in a significant change of emphasis. The main services are no longer those needed to meet the environmental problems in cities or law and order in Nigeria - they are the personal services aimed at individuals, whether they live in towns or in the country. Similarly, there has been a change of emphasis in the balance between central and local government. The part played by central government in prescribing what services should be provided, and to what standard, has enormously increased and these decisions in turn depend upon the national economy and the ability to pay.

Thus, local government reform became necessary in both countries not only because of the aforementioned socio-economic, technological and political changes that have taken place, but also because the social values of the citizens have changed. The public demands resulting from industrialization and urban living have forced local authorities to extend or adjust traditional services and to provide a wide range of new services. People are no longer satisfied with just voting during elections; they now want to partake of decision making and execution. People are no longer satisfied that the government - central or local - is providing services; they now demand that these services be performed efficiently and effectively. They no longer see the provision of services as a privilege; today they see it as a right. In short, they

no longer want a government that is paternalistic. Clearly human geography, patterns of life, social thinking, the functions of local authorities and the nature of local administration had all changed so drastically that the need for new institutions became inevitable.

Our analysis in Chapter 6 shows that it is perfectly possible for a developing country (Nigeria) and a developed one (Britain) to have identical reform objectives such as democracy and efficiency. It was inevitable that there were differences between the two countries in the emphasis placed on some reform objectives. For instance, both economic development and national unity were conspicuous reform objectives in Nigeria but they were only implicitly expressed in Britain. After all, if each local authority in a country effectively and efficiently performs its functions, would the aggregate not be a sound and efficient nation ?

As for reform strategies, our research proves that it is not impossible to devise a strategy with universal applicability, although with each country adapting the strategy to its own circumstance or environment. Our treatment of the reforms in both countries as a process is a strategy that is likely to meet with success in any administrative reform. Thus, it is necessary to first diagnose the defects in the existing administrative system, set objectives and strategies, implement the reform objectives, and have a feedback mechanism for the purposes of evaluation and modification of plan as originally indicated. The process approach is comprehensive in its scope and does include and focus on the interaction between and among individuals and organizations and thereby throws light on the dynamics of administrative behaviour. And in order to effectively implement the reforms, it is either that the Government allows for a legislative process so that the whole issue can be debated by the citizens and their representatives, or

the reforms are forced on the people in countries without a mature and effective democratic institution. In either case, the usefulness of research cannot be over-emphasized.

Perhaps the implementation stage is the most important in a reform (see Chapter 7). Our research confirms Lee's hypothesis (see Chapter 1) that time and leadership are two crucial variables in reform implementation. The reforms in Britain and Nigeria were carried through because the reformers were strongly committed and genuinely interested in it and because the socio-economic and political environments were favourable. Thus Backoff's hypothesis that the greater the comprehensiveness, complexity, and magnitude of changes, the lesser the probability of implementation can only be assumed to be true a priori. It is certainly difficult to prove in the case of the 1974 and 1976 reforms in Britain and Nigeria respectively because his hypothesis failed to take into consideration other important variables such as leadership, time, and socio-political environment of the country concerned. Our research proves that the reforms in both countries were comprehensive and complex, yet they were implemented because, as we said above, the reformers had the will and the power to do so, and the time and socio-political atmosphere were propitious.

In Chapter 1 (p. 47) we said that there are a number of methodological points to be considered in evaluating a reform. We also set ourselves some hypothetical questions (p. 52) which we tried to answer in the body of the thesis. We saw in Chapter 8 that it is not sufficient to base our evaluation purely on the reformer's goals and declarations, hence the importance of our fieldwork. In quest of greater accuracy, we, like Joseph Campbell's protagonist in The Hero With a Thousand Faces (1975), had to enter areas in which revelations are harmful and persistent inquiry is discouraged. Our fieldwork did prove that the reforms are not as successful as the reformers want to claim. It is therefore very

important that any evaluation should be based on the people's feelings and attitudes, those whom the entire administrative apparatus is designed to serve. It is very difficult to see how the reforms in both countries have greatly improved democracy, economic development and efficiency except within a very rudimentary and narrow range such as the reinstatement of representative local government in Nigeria or the introduction of corporate management structures in Britain. Although we do not mean to undermine the achievements of the reforms in both countries which we analysed in Chapter 8, our research shows that many of the problems identified before the reforms have not been solved (see Chapter 8). There are still a lot of structural problems facing local government in both countries; central control has not diminished; there has been no dramatic change in development; local skills and the so-called councillor calibre have not changed or improved; there are no considerable improvements in social welfare and levels of satisfaction; public apathy in local affairs has not declined; and duplication, waste and corruption have not been stemmed, especially in Nigeria. Perhaps the most important thing which our research revealed is that the reformers deviated from some of their reform objectives at the implementation stage, mainly for political and administrative expedience (see Chapters 7 and 8).

Chapter 9 attempts to provide solutions to the post-reform problems analysed in Chapter 8. Any future reforms in both countries must take the implications of the setting of the contemporary economic situation into serious consideration. At the most general level, the problem of local government can be seen as an aspect of the overall problem of the public sector in a capitalist economy. This is a problem that centres on the sources of state revenue and the scale of public expenditure, and on the scope and direction of state intervention. At the core of local

government struggle for democracy is the problem of the scale of its expenditure and the nature of its interventions, a problem that any future reforms must solve. Our hypotheses (the use of neighbourhood councils, the age-set concept and the growth pole) are likely to help in solving many of the problems we have identified. Surely, they would enhance democratic participation, bring about even development, help in reducing the work-load of local authorities thereby improving their efficiency, and give people practical experience of self-reliance.

APPENDIX I

NIGERIA: LOCAL GOVERNMENT MANDATORY FUNCTIONS:

Social Conveniences or Amenities:

1. Markets and motor parks;
2. Sanitary inspection, refuse and nightsoil disposal;
3. Control of vermin;
4. Slaughter houses and slabs;
5. Public conveniences;
6. Burial grounds;
7. Registration of births, deaths, and marriages;
8. Provision of community and local recreation centres;
9. Parks, Gardens, Fuel Plantations;
10. Control of hoarding, advertisements etc;
11. Naming of roads and streets.

Taxation and Control on Private and Public Utilities and Services:

1. Licensing, supervision and regulation of bake houses and laundaries;
2. Licensing, regulation and control of the sale of liquor;
3. Licensing and regulation of bicycles, hand carts, and other types of vehicles except those mechanically propelled, and canoes;
4. Control and collection of revenue from forestry outside the "Forest Estate" or gazetted Forest Reserves;
5. Collection of vehicle parking charges;
6. Collection of property and other rates, community tax and other designated revenue sources.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT OPTIONAL FUNCTIONS (these are run concurrently with the State Governments)

Welfare Functions.

1. Health Centres, Maternity Centres, Dispensaries, Health Clinics, Ambulance Services, Leprosy Clinics and preventive Health Services;
2. Abbatoirs, Meat Inspection;
3. Nursery, Primary and Adult Education;
4. Information and Public Enlightenment;
5. Scholarship and bursaries;
6. Public libraries and reading rooms;
7. Agricultural Extension Services; Veterinary Services;
8. Rural and semi-urban water supply;
9. Road and street lighting and drainage;
10. Provision of homes for destitutes, the infirm and orphans;
11. Provision of public utilities;
12. Pipe sewerage systems.

Protection and Environmental Functions

1. Fire Services;
2. Control of water and atmospheric pollution;
3. Control of beggars, of prostitution and repatriation of destitutes;
4. Public housing programmes;
5. Operation of commercial undertakings;
6. Control of traffic and parking;
7. Regulation and control of buildings;
8. Town and country planning.

Source: Federal Republic of Nigeria (1976), Guidelines for Local Government Reform, Kaduna, Government Printer, pp.2-3.



BRITAIN: ALLOCATION OF MAIN FUNCTIONS

Non-Metropolitan Counties

Social Services

Education and Related Services

Education

Libraries

Museums and Art Galleries\*

Housing and Town Development

Certain reserve powers, e.g.  
over-spill

Town Development

Town and Country Planning and  
Related Matters

Structure Plans

Local plans (in special cases)

Development Control (strategic  
and reserved decisions)

Acquisition and Disposal of Land

Clearance of Derelict Land\*

National Parks (subject to  
existence of boards)

Country Parks\*

Footpaths and Bridleways

Commons - registration

Caravan Sites - provision\*

Gipsy Sites - provision

Smallholdings and Cottage  
Holdings.

Highways and Related Subjects

Transport Planning

Highways

Traffic

Parking

Public Transport (co-ordination)

Road Safety

Street Lighting.

Non-Metropolitan Districts

Education and Related Services

Museums and Art Galleries\*

Housing and Town Development

Housing

Town Development

Town and Country Planning  
and Related Matters

Local Plans (most)

Development Control (most)

Acquisition and Disposal of  
Land.

Clearance of Derelict Land\*

Country Parks\*

Footpaths and Bridleways

Caravan Sites - provision\*

licensing and management

Gipsy Sites - management

Allotments

Highways and Related Subjects

Highways - can claim powers

over unclassified roads in

urban areas.

Public Transport - operation.

Environmental Health

Food Safety and Hygiene

Control of Communicable

Disease

Control of Office, Shop and

Factory Premises

Consumer Protection  
Weights and Measures  
Food and Drugs  
Trade Descriptions  
Consumer Protection.

Other Environmental Services  
Land Drainage  
Refuse Disposal  
Health Education\*

Police and Fire  
Police (subject to amalgamation)  
Fire

Recreation and Tourism  
Swimming Baths\*  
Parks and Open Spaces\*  
Physical Training and Recreation\*

Licensing and Registration Functions  
Births, Deaths and Marriages  
Adoption Societies

Other Services  
Entertainments\*  
Aerodromes\*  
Natural Emergences\*

Other Environmental Services  
Local Sewers  
Land Drainage  
Refuse Collection  
Litter  
Coast Protection  
Clean Air  
Building Regulations  
Street Cleansing  
Nuisances  
Cemeteries and Crematoria  
Markets  
Offensive Trades  
Health Education\*

Recreation and Tourism  
Swimming Baths\*  
Parks and Open Spaces\*  
Physical Training and Recreation\*  
Publicity for Tourist Attractions

Licensing and Registration Functions

Other Services  
Entertainments\*  
Aerodromes\*  
Natural Emergences\*

NOTE: This Table ignores minor variations which may exist in Wales.

#### METROPOLITAN COUNTIES

Education and Related Services  
Museums and Art Galleries\*

Housing and Town Development  
Certain reserve powers e.g. over-spill  
Town Development

#### METROPOLITAN DISTRICTS

##### Social Services

Education and Related Services  
Education  
Libraries  
Museums and Art Galleries\*

Housing and Town Development  
Housing  
Town Development

Town and Country Planning and  
Related Matters  
Structure Plans  
Local Plans (in special cases)  
Development Control (strategic  
and reserved decisions)  
Acquisition and Disposal of Land\*  
Clearance of Derelict Land\*  
National Parks (subject to  
existence of boards)  
Country Parks\*  
Commons - registration  
Caravan Sites - provision\*  
Gipsy Sites - provision  
Smallholdings and Cottage Holdings.

Highways and Related Subjects  
Transport Planning  
Highways  
Traffic  
Parking  
Passenger Transport  
Road Safety

Consumer Protection  
Weights and Measures  
Food and Drugs  
Trade Descriptions  
Consumer Protection

Other Environmental Services  
Land Drainage  
Refuse Disposal  
Health Education\*

Police and Fire  
Police (subject to amalgamation)  
Fire

Town and Country Planning  
and Related Matters  
Local Plans (most)  
Development Control (most)  
Acquisition and Disposal  
of Land\*  
Clearance of Derelict Land\*  
Country Parks\*  
Footpaths and Bridleways  
Commons - management  
Caravan Sites - provisions\*  
licensing and management  
Gipsy Sites - management.

Highways and Related Subjects  
Highways - can claim  
maintenance power over  
unclassified roads in  
urban areas.

Environmental Health  
Food Safety and Hygiene  
Control of Communicable  
Disease  
Control of office, shop and  
Factory Premises.

Other Environmental Services  
Local Sewers  
Land Drainage  
Refuse Collection  
Litter  
Coast Protection  
Clean Air  
Building Regulations  
Nuisances  
Cemeteries and Crematoria  
Markets  
Offensive Trades  
Health Education\*

Recreation and Tourism  
Swimming Baths\*  
Parks and Open Spaces\*  
Physical Training and Recreation\*

Other Services  
Entertainments\*  
Aerodromes\*  
Natural Emergencies\*

Recreation and Tourism  
Swimming Baths\*  
Parks and Open Spaces\*  
Physical Training and Recreation\*  
Publicity for Tourist Attractions

Licensing and Registration  
Functions.  
Other Services  
Entertainments\*  
Aerodromes\*  
Natural Emergencies\*

\* = Concurrent functions.

Source: Richards, 1978, pp.181-184.

## APPENDIX II

### POWERS AND FUNCTIONS OF SECRETARIES OF LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

The Secretary to the Local Government as the Chief Executive to the Local Government Council will be responsible for:

- (i) co-ordinating the work of all the departments of the council;
- (ii) initiating policy proposals for consideration by the council;
- (iii) implementing policy decisions of the council;
- (iv) giving general guidance and advice to the council on all matters pertaining to the treasury and the conduct of its business;
- (v) maintaining a proper system of accounts in according with the provisions of the law and the instructions contained in the Financial Memoranda;
- (vi) satisfying himself that the council is discharging its responsibilities for supervision of its finances as detailed in the Financial Memoranda;
- (vii) ensuring that the council appoints an annual Board of Survey on revenue earning books;
- (viii) handling all personnel matters affecting the councils in accordance with existing regulations;
- (ix) submitting monthly progress reports on council activities to the Ministry of Local Government and Social Development;
- (x) security within the Local Government Authority area;
- (xi) setting targets and measuring performance of council staff;
- (xii) submitting monthly Intelligence Report in respect of the area to Government;
- (xiii) co-ordinating Government functions in the area;
- (xiv) any other duties that may be assigned to him by the Ministry of Local Government and Social Development or the Government.

Source: ANAMBRA STATE (1976)

### APPENDIX III

#### ROYAL COMMISSION ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN ENGLAND 1966-1969 VOLUME 1

#### CHAPTER 1. Main conclusions and how they were reached

##### Main conclusions

1. The pattern and character of local government must be such as to enable it to do four things: to perform efficiently a wide range of profoundly important tasks concerned with the safety, health and wellbeing, both material and cultural, of people in different localities; to attract and hold the interest of its citizens; to develop enough inherent strength to deal with national authorities in a valid partnership; and to adapt itself without disruption to the present unprecedented process of change in the way people live, work, move, shop and enjoy themselves. These purposes have guided our assessment of the present and our proposals for the future.
2. We are unanimous in our conviction that local government in England needs a new structure and a new map. Ten of the 11 members of the Commission agree about the principles on which the new structure and map should be based.
3. England (outside London which was not within our terms of reference) should be divided into 61 new local government areas, each covering town and country. In 58 of them a single authority should be responsible for all services. In the special circumstances of three metropolitan areas around Birmingham, Liverpool and Manchester, responsibility for services should be divided in each case between a metropolitan authority whose key functions would be planning, transportation and major development, and a number of metropolitan district authorities whose key functions would be education, the personal social services, health and housing.
4. These 61 new local government areas should be grouped, together with Greater London, in eight provinces, each with its own provincial council. Provincial councils would be elected by the authorities for the unitary and metropolitan areas (including, in the south east, the Greater London authorities), but would also include co-opted members. The key function of these councils would be to settle the provincial strategy and planning framework within which the main authorities will operate. They would replace the present regional economic planning councils and collaborate with central government in the economic and social development of each province. They will therefore play an essential part in the future adaptation of local government to the changes in ways of life and movement that time and technical progress will bring.
5. Within the 58 unitary areas and, wherever they were wanted, within the three metropolitan areas, local councils should be elected to represent and communicate the wishes of cities, towns,

and villages in all matters of special concern to the inhabitants. The only duty of the local council would be to represent local opinion, but it would have the right to be consulted on matters of special interest to its inhabitants and it would have the power to do for the local community a number of things best done locally, including the opportunity to play a part in some of the main local government services on a scale appropriate to its resources and subject to the agreement of the main authority.

How main conclusions were reached

6. In the light of all the evidence presented to us, of our review of the present pattern and working of local government and of our efforts to foresee the future, we became convinced that there are four basic defects in the existing structure. Together these structural defects seriously reduce, and will increasingly reduce, the chances of ensuring that local government works efficiently and economically, is understood by the citizens who elect it, and holds their interest. The following are the four basic faults:

- i. Local government areas do not fit the pattern of life and work in modern England. The gap will widen as social, economic and technological changes quicken.
- ii. The fragmentation of England into 79 county boroughs and 45 counties, exercising independent jurisdictions and dividing town from country, has made the proper planning of development and transportation impossible. The result has often been an atmosphere of hostility between county boroughs and counties and this has made it harder to decide difficult questions on their merits.
- iii. The division of responsibility within each county between county council and a number of county district councils, together with the position of county boroughs as islands in the counties, means that services which should be in the hands of one authority are fragmented among several. The difficulty of meeting comprehensively the needs of families and individuals is thus greatly increased.
- iv. Many local authorities are too small, in size and revenue, and in consequence too short of highly qualified manpower and technical equipment, to be able to do their work as well as it could and should be done.

7, Partly but not wholly because of these structural faults, and in spite of the devoted efforts of councillors and officers, there are serious failings in local government's relationships with the public and with national government:

- i. The complex local government machinery seems, and often is, irrelevant and therefore impotent in face of the problems that confront people in their daily lives, either collectively or as families and individuals. Hence, the feeling of many people that local government cannot help them and the frequent sense of frustration among councillors and officers.

ii. Parliament and central government doubt the ability of local governors, within the straitjacket of the present system, to run local affairs.

iii. The variety in size and type of local authorities, and the existence of several local authority associations reflecting that variety, mean that local government seldom acts effectively as a single body in its dealings with central government.

8. In considering what changes are needed to correct these structural and other defects there is one fundamental question. What size of authority, or range of size, in terms of population and of area, is needed for the democratic and efficient provision of particular services and for local self-government as a whole?

9. After examining each of the main services in turn, we decided that answers to that question must be found by seeking to apply to each part of the country the following general principles:

i. Local authority areas must be so defined that they enable citizens and their elected representatives to have a sense of common purpose.

ii. The areas must be based upon the interdependence of town and country.

iii. In each part of the country, all services concerned with the physical environment (planning, transportation and major development) must be in the hands of one authority. Areas must be large enough to enable these authorities to meet the pressing land needs of the growing population, and their inhabitants must share a common interest in their environment because it is where they live, work, shop, and find their recreation.

iv. All personal services (education, personal social services, health and housing), being closely linked in operation and effect, must also be in the hands of one authority, as strongly recommended by the recent report of the Seeborn Committee.

v. If possible, both the 'environmental' and the 'personal' groups of services should be in the hands of the same authority, because the influence of one on the other is great and likely to increase. Further, concentrating responsibility for all main local government services in a single authority for each area, as in the present county borough, would help to make the idea of local self-government a reality. Through allocation of priorities and co-ordinated use of resources, a single authority can relate its programme for all services to objectives for its area considered as a whole.

vi. Authorities must, however, be bigger than most county boroughs (and all county district) are at present, if they are to command the resources and skilled manpower which they need to provide services with maximum efficiency.



vii. The size of authorities must vary over a wide range if areas are to match the pattern of population. But a minimum population is necessary. What this should be is a question of great difficulty and we received much evidence about it. We concluded that this pointed to a minimum of around 250,000. Though authoritative witnesses would prefer a higher minimum for education - perhaps as high as 500,000 - we did not accept that this was essential. Moreover, a minimum above 250,000 would be too high to provide coherent and reasonably compact areas in many parts of the country. It would also be unnecessarily large for the other personal services (the personal social services, health and housing), which must be kept together with education.

viii. At the other end of the scale, authorities must not be so large in terms of population that organization of their business becomes difficult and the elected representatives cannot keep in touch with the people affected by their policies. This is especially important in the personal services. There was little evidence to guide us but we concluded that a population of not much more than 1,000,000 should be the maximum for the personal services, though much would depend on the social and geographic characteristics of each area.

ix. Where the area required for planning and the other environmental services contains too large a population for the personal services, a single authority for all services would not be appropriate; and in these parts of the country, responsibilities must be clearly divided between two levels, and related services kept together.

x. The new local government pattern should so far as practicable stem from the existing one. Wherever the case for change is in doubt, the common interests, traditions and loyalties inherent in the present pattern, and the strength of existing services as going concerns, should be respected.

10. In considering what the new local government structure should be, we first concentrated on the 'city region' since this was the idea strongly advocated for the whole country by the Ministry of Housing and Local Government, the department with chief responsibility for English local government. We examined various possible local government maps of England in turn, and the following points emerged:

i. The city region idea has value because it takes account of the fact that people are now much more mobile than they were.

ii. Witnesses put forward a variety of possible areas as city regions, ranging in number from 25 to 45 for the country as a whole. This suggested that the city region was not an idea which could be applied uniformly all over England, and in some parts of the country it did not seem to us to fit reality. In a number of areas it does provide the clue: around the great urban concentrations of Birmingham, Liverpool and Manchester, and also in areas where a big

town is the natural centre for a wide area of surrounding countryside and smaller towns. But in others, such as the south west, insistence on the idea of the city region seemed to mean creating artificially constructed areas whose people have no sense of looking to a city centre or of sharing interests peculiar to themselves; and in the south east the idea leads to no clear local government pattern because the influence of London overshadows that of other centres.

iii. Many suggested city regions would be so large as to need a second operational tier of authorities if local government is not to be too remote for effective contact between the elected representatives and the people. But many of these second-tier authorities would be too small to find the resources needed for the main local government services; and in any case the present splitting of personal services which ought to be concentrated in one authority would be reproduced over a large part of the country.

11. We therefore next considered various alternatives to applying the idea of the city region to the whole country. We examined a series of maps illustrating the other main proposals for a new structure put to us in evidence. These proposals were: a single tier; two tiers of various kinds and sizes; main authorities performing most functions but with a level above them, covering a 'province', to perform the rest. Other maps which our staff prepared for us showed that the country could be divided into 130 to 140 areas which had some measure of coherence because of internal social and economic ties, but many of these areas have populations far too small to enable them to employ the range of staff needed for the efficient provision of any of the main services.

12. Meanwhile we had become increasingly convinced by those who emphasised the need for an organ of community at grass-roots level. Our conclusion was that any new pattern of democratic government must include elected local councils, not to provide main services, but to promote and watch over the particular interests of communities in city, town and village throughout England.

13. Our examination of England had also led us to the conclusion that local government, however organised, needs to include a new representative institution with authority over areas larger than any city region, not unlike the eight areas of the present regional economic planning councils. This provincial council would handle the broader planning issues, work out provincial economic strategy in collaboration with central government and be able to act on behalf of the whole province.

14. Assuming therefore that whatever arrangements were made for the operation of the main local government services there would be need for complementary institutions 'above' and 'below', at the levels of the province and the local community, we decided to re-examine each part of England in turn, apply our general principles and ask ourselves where there are areas in which operational responsibility for all local government services can appropriately be concentrated; that is to say, areas which

- i. can properly be treated as coherent units for carrying out the 'environmental' group of services;
- ii. have populations broadly within the range of 250,000 to not much more than a million, the size that we had concluded would be appropriate for the efficient performance of the 'personal' group of services;
- iii. can be looked after effectively and democratically by one council.

Where areas existed that met all these three conditions, the argument in favour of one authority for each of them would be decisive. Elsewhere responsibility would need to be divided between authorities at two tiers; and we recognised that this would be necessary where we found that the planning problems of big urban concentrations had to be dealt with over areas containing such large populations that a single authority would be unwieldy and, for the personal services, remote.

15. In working out possible boundaries with these alternatives in mind we had to judge in each case where the balance of advantage lay, by weighing a number of different considerations, and in particular these three;

- i. The pattern of living - that is to say, the distribution of population and industry and the pattern of travel for employment, shopping, entertainment and other purposes, together with prospective developments likely to change these facts and modify the social and economic future of the area.
- ii. Democracy and efficiency - the best practicable balance between the needs of efficiency (in terms of population, geography and resources of money, manpower and technical equipment) and the requirements of effective representation.
- iii. The present pattern of local government.

16. It was this survey that resulted in our final conclusions. It convinced us that over most parts of the country, 58 in all, a single authority should be made responsible for all services, but that in three metropolitan areas (additional to Greater London) the unit needed for comprehensive planning, transportation and major development was both too large for unitary government and large enough to be sub-divided into units suitable for education, the personal social services, health and housing; in each of these three areas therefore responsibility for services should be divided between one metropolitan and several large metropolitan district authorities.

Source: Royal Commission on Local Government in England (1969), Vol.1, Report, Cmd 4040, London, HMSO, pp.1-6.

# APPENDIX IV

## A COMPARISON OF THE VARIOUS REFORM PROPOSALS 1969-72\*

### 1. Areas

|  | Redcliffe-Maud Report<br>Majority Proposals<br>(Cmd 4040, 1969)   | Labour Government<br>White Paper<br>(Cmd 4276, 1970)  | Conservative Government<br>White Paper<br>(Cmd 4584, 1971)  | Local Government<br>Bill (1971)   | Local Government<br>Act (1972)<br>Plus Later Orders  |
|--|---|---|---|---|--|
| METROPOLITAN<br>AREAS AND<br>DISTRICTS:<br>NUMBER              | 3<br>(20 Districts).  | 5<br>(28 Districts).  | 6<br>(34 Districts).  | 6<br>(34 Districts).  | 6<br>(36 Districts).   |
| AUTHORITIES<br>OUTSIDE THE<br>METROPOLITAN<br>AREAS:<br>NUMBER | 58<br>Unitary<br>Authorities.   | 51<br>Unitary<br>Authorities.   | 38 Counties + Districts<br>(normally with at least<br>40,000 pop.). A<br>Boundary Commission<br>to recommend District<br>areas. | 38 Counties+ Districts<br>as in Cmd 4584.<br>(Main changes in<br>county areas: Humberside<br>N.E. Essex: Harrogate.)<br>(Wales: 8 Counties +<br>37 Districts.)  | 39 Counties + 296 Districts<br>(Isle of Wight a county).<br>(Wales: 8 Counties + 37<br>Districts.)   |
| PROVINCIAL<br>COUNCILS   | 8<br>Indirectly elected.  | Wait until<br>Crowther Report.  | Wait until<br>Crowther Report.  | Wait until Crowther<br>Report.  | No provisions. (Wait until<br>Crowther/Kilbrandon Report)  |
| PARISH OR<br>LOCAL<br>COUNCILS                                 | In unitary areas present<br>authorities become local<br>councils. In<br>metropolitan areas only<br>if they so desire. | As Cmd 4040 but with<br>the possibility of large<br>towns being divided into<br>several local councils. | Present Parish Councils<br>to continue. Urban areas<br>left for further<br>discussion.  | Present PCs to continue.<br>Urban PCs possible some<br>time after 1974. (Wales<br>present PCs to continue<br>as Community Councils. All<br>except 6 largest towns<br>able to have a Community<br>Council. Boundary<br>Commission to review areas<br>soon after 1974.) | Present PCs to continue.<br>300 MBs and UDCs become<br>urban parishes (nearly all<br>under 20,000 pop.),<br>including several in<br>metropolitan areas.<br>(Wales: as Bill.) |

## 2. Areas: North-West

|  | Redcliffe-Maud Report<br>Majority Proposals<br>(Cmd 4040, 1969)   | Labour Government<br>White Paper<br>(Cmd 4276, 1970) | Conservative Government<br>White Paper<br>(Cmd 4584, 1971)  | Local Government<br>Bill (1971)  | Local Government<br>Act (1972)<br>Plus Later Orders  |
|--|---|--|---|--|--|
| TOP-TIER IN<br>METROPOLITAN<br>AREAS       | 2<br>(SELNEC to include 90<br>existing authorities;<br>Merseyside 31.)  | As Cmd 4040  | As Cmd 4040 but<br>smaller. (SELNEC<br>78; Merseyside 25.)  | As Cmd 4040 but<br>even smaller. (Greater<br>Manchester 71;<br>Merseyside 23.)   | Smaller still. (Greater<br>Manchester 68; Merseyside<br>22.)   |
| SECOND-TIER<br>IN<br>METROPOLITAN<br>AREAS | SELNEC - 9. (Wigan;<br>Bolton; Bury-Rochdale;<br>Warrington; Manchester-<br>Salford; Altrincham;<br>Oldham; Ashton;<br>Stockport.)<br>Merseyside - 4 (Southport;<br>Liverpool-Bottle;<br>St. Helens; Chester-<br>Wirral.) | As Cmd 4040.   | SELNEC - 9. (Wigan;<br>Bolton; Bury-Rochdale;<br>Salford-Manchester;<br>Stretford-Altrincham;<br>Oldham; Ashton; Stockport.)<br>Merseyside - 4<br>(Bootle; Liverpool;<br>St. Helens; Wirral.) | Greater Manchester - 9<br>(As in Cmd 4584 with<br>minor changes.)<br>Merseyside - 4<br>(As in Cmd 4584 with<br>minor changes. Biggest<br>change is that 'Bootle'<br>becomes 'Bootle-<br>Southport'.) | GMCC - 10. (Bury and<br>Rochdale separated.)<br>MCC-5<br>(St Helens and Huyton<br>separated.)                |
| TOP-TIER<br>ELSEWHERE                      | 6 Unitary<br>Authorities. (Cumberland;<br>Furness; Fylde; Preston;<br>Blackburn; Burnley.)<br>Also South Cheshire to<br>go with Stoke.)   | As Cmd 4040  | 3 Counties. (Cumberland-<br>Westmorland; Lancashire;<br>Cheshire.)  | 3 Counties as in Cmd<br>4584. (Minor changes to<br>boundaries; 'Cumbria'<br>named.)  | As Bill. Minor changes<br>by reducing metropolitan<br>areas (Poynton, Wilmslow,<br>Whitworth, Skelmersdale.) |
| SECOND-TIER<br>ELSEWHERE                   | None  | None   | To be decided after Boundary<br>Commission review.  | To be decided after<br>Boundary Commission<br>review.  | Cumbria - 6. Lancashire<br>- 14. Cheshire - 8.   |

## 3. Functions

|   | Redcliffe-Maud Report<br>Majority Proposals<br>(Cmd 4040, 1969)   | Labour Government<br>White Paper<br>(Cmd 4276, 1970).   | Conservative Government<br>White Paper<br>(Cmd 4584, 1971).  | Local Government<br>Bill (1971)   | Local Government<br>Act (1972)<br>Plus Later Orders   |
|---|---|---|--|---|---|
| METROPOLITAN<br>COUNTY<br>FUNCTIONS         | Planning and Transport-<br>ation; Housing policy;<br>Police; Fire; Water;<br>Sewage and Refuse<br>Disposal. | As Cmd 4040 except:<br>(1) County to do<br>Education.<br>(2) County to be<br>Rating Authority.                  | As Cmd 4040 except:<br>(1) Districts to do some<br>Development Control.<br>(2) County to have minimal<br>Housing Powers.<br>(County not to be Education<br>or Rating Authority.) | Cmd 4584 plus further<br>powers for districts;<br>(1) Local Plan-making<br>(2) Clean Air etc.<br>(3) Maintenance of<br>unclassified urban roads.  | Police; Fire; Consumer<br>Protection; Most Roads;<br>Structure Planning;<br>Passenger Transport;<br>Refuse Disposal;<br>Reserve Housing Powers;<br>plus 'agency' (see below).                           |
| NON-<br>METROPOLITAN<br>COUNTY<br>FUNCTIONS | Unitary authorities<br>would be all-purpose.  | Unitary authorities<br>would be all-purpose.  | As Metropolitan Counties<br>above plus:<br>(1) Education.<br>(2) Libraries.<br>(3) Social Services.  | As Metropolitan Counties<br>above plus:<br>(1) Education.<br>(2) Libraries.<br>(3) Social Services but<br>minus<br>(4) Public Transport<br>undertakings.<br>(Wales - all districts do<br>refuse disposal, some may<br>run libraries.) | As Bill with minor<br>amendments. In all areas<br>'agency' clause allows<br>power sharing (not in the<br>case of Education, Police,<br>Social Services).<br>(Wales - as Bill with<br>minor amendments.) |
| LOCAL<br>COUNCIL<br>FUNCTIONS               | Minor local powers<br>plus possibility of<br>some involvement in<br>running of major<br>services.           | Local powers only.<br>(Idea of District<br>Committees of Unitary<br>Authorities for major<br>services floated). | Present parishes to continue<br>with their powers.   | Present parishes to<br>continue with their powers   | As present parishes plus:<br>(1) Right to receive and<br>comment on planning<br>applications.<br>(2) Powers to spend more<br>without permission from<br>above.  |

## 4. Elections

|                             | Redcliffe-Maud Report<br>Majority Proposals<br>(Cmnd 4040, 1969)  | Labour Government<br>White Paper<br>(Cmnd 4276, 1970)    | Conservative Government<br>White Paper<br>(Cmnd 4584, 1971)     | Local Government<br>Bill (1971)  | Local Government<br>Act (1972)<br>Plus Later Orders   |
|-----------------------------|---|--|---|--|---|
| ALDERMEN AND<br>COUNCILLORS | Abolish aldermen. Maximum<br>of 75 councillors.   | Abolish aldermen. Consult<br>on number of councillors.   | Consult on aldermen. No<br>mention of number of<br>councillors. | Abolish aldermen. No<br>provisions on council<br>size.   | Aldermen abolished.<br>Most County Councils<br>have under 100 members,<br>most Districts under 80,<br>though no maxima in Act.    |
| PAYMENT OF<br>COUNCILLORS   | Uncertain. Possibly<br>pay senior members.  | Against. Better expenses<br>favoured.                    | Considering payment. Better<br>expenses favoured.               | A flat-rate taxable<br>Attendance Allowance<br>introduced.   | Attendance Allowance.   |
| ELECTIONS                   | General election with<br>single-member wards.<br>Election date and length<br>of term of office -<br>further study needed. | No proposals. Further<br>consultations to take<br>place. | No proposals. Further<br>consultations to take place.           | Counties - general election CCs-<br>in single-member divisions.<br>Districts - partial<br>election (1/3 each time)<br>in 3-member wards. All<br>councillors to serve 4 years.<br>variable.<br>All councillors-4-year<br>terms of office. | single-member divisions<br>MDS-partial election in<br>3-member wards.<br>CDs-either partial or<br>general, ward size<br>variable. |

\* In Tables, 1,3 and 4 the first three columns refer to England, excluding London. The last two columns (Bill and Act) also include Wales.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Abueva, J.S. (1970). "Administrative Reform and Culture", in Lee, H. and Samonte, A.G. (eds.), Administrative Reforms in Asia (Manila, Eastern Regional Organization for Public Administration), pp. 21-47.
- Ackoff, R.L. (1970). A Concept of Corporate Planning (New York, Wiley).
- Adamolekun, L. (1977). "The Theory and Practice of Local Government Reform in the B/P State of Nigeria", Journal of Administration Overseas, January, pp. 30-42.
- Adamolekun, L. and Rowland, L. (eds.) (1979). The New Local Government System in Nigeria (Ibadan, Heinemann Educational Book Ltd.).
- Adediji, A. (1969). Nigerian Federal Finance: Its Development, Problems and Prospects (New York, Africana Publishing Corp.).
- Adediji, A. and Rowland, L. (eds.) (1972). Local Government Finance in Nigeria: Problems and Prospects (Ile Ife, University of Ife Press).
- Adejuyigbe, O. (1972). "Reorganization of Local Government Councils in Western Nigeria", Quarterly Journal of Administration, VI, 4, pp. 401-416.
- Adewumi, J.B. (1973). "Administrative Problems in Central-Local Relationships", Nigerian Journal of Public Affairs, 111, 2, pp. 44-56.
- Adrian, C.R. (1952). "General Characteristics of Non-Partisan Elections", American Political Science Review, 46, 3, pp. 766-776.
- Africa South of the Sahara 1979-80 (1979). (London, Europa Publications Limited).
- Ajaegbu, H.I. (1972). "Regional Planning and Rural Areas in Nigeria", in Barbour, K.M. (ed.), Planning for Nigeria (Ibadan, University of Ibadan Press), pp. 100-109.
- Akindolire, A.F. (1963). "Local Government at the Cross-Roads", The Council, 11, 4, pp. 1-8.
- Alford, R.R. (1967). "The Comparative Study of Urban Politics", in Schnore, L.F. and Fagin, H. (eds.), Urban Research and Policy Making (Beverly Hills, Sage), pp. 263-302.
- Aliyu, A.Y. (1978). "Local Government Reform as seen in Kaduna", in Panter-Brick, K. (ed.), Soldiers and Oil: The Political Transformation of Nigeria (London, Frank Cass), pp. 270-287.



- Aliyu, A.Y. and Koehn, P. (1980). "Inter-Governmental Relations and Community Autonomy in Nigeria: The Case of the Northern States in the Post Local Government Reform Period", Paper presented to the Seminar on Change in Rural Hausaland, Bagauda Lake, 29th Feb.-1st March.
- Allen, H.J.B. (1972). "Aspects of Urban Administration in the Northern States of Nigeria", Savanna, 1,1, pp.15-27.
- Almond, G. and Coleman, J.S. (eds.) (1960). The Politics of Developing Areas (Princeton, Princeton University Press).
- Almond, G. and Powell, G.B. (eds.) (1966). Comparative Politics: A Developmental Approach (Boston, Little Brown & Co.).
- Anambra State (1976). Reform of the Local Government System in Anambra State of Nigeria (Enugu, Government Printer).
- Argyris, C. (1959). "Understanding Organizational Change", General Systems Yearbook.
- Arikpo, O. (1967). The Development of Modern Nigeria (Harmondsworth, Penguin).
- Ashford, D.E. (1974). "The Effects of Central Finance on the British Local Government System", British Journal of Political Science, 4, pp.305-22.
- Ashford, D.E. (1975). "Theories of Local Government: Some Comparative Considerations", Comparative Political Studies, 8, pp.90-107.
- Ashford, D.E. (1975a). "Parties and Participation in British Local Government and some American Parallels", Urban Affairs Quarterly, 11, pp.58-81.
- Ashford, D.E. (1981). Policy and Politics in Britain: The Limits of Consensus (Oxford, Basil Blackwell).
- Awolowo, O. (1947). Path to Nigerian Freedom (London, Faber and Faber).
- Azingbe, J.B. (1978). "State and Local Government Relations", Paper presented to the National Conference on Local Government Reforms, A.B.U., Zaria.
- Backoff, R. (1974). "Operationalizing Administrative Reform for Improved Governmental Performance", Administration and Society, 6, pp.73-106.
- Barnes, L. (1935). The Duty of Empire (London, Gollancz).
- Barry, B. (1974). "Size and Democracy", Government and Opposition, 9,4, pp.492-503.

- Basil, D.C. and Cook, C.W. *The Management of Change* (London, McGraw-Hill Book Co.).
- Bennis, W.G., Benne, K.D. & Chin, R. (eds.) (1969). *The Planning of Change* (New York, Rinehart).
- Bhutani, K.N. (1966). "Implementing Administrative Innovations and Reforms", Indian Journal of Public Administration, X11, pp.612-17.
- Birch, A.H. (1959). *Small Town Politics* (London, O.U.P.).
- Birch, A.H. (1962). *The Idea of Responsible Government* (Hull, University of Hull Publications).
- Blalock, H.M. (1959). "Towards a Clarification of System Analysis in the Social Sciences", Philosophy of Science, 26.
- Boaden, N.T. (1969). "Local Elections and Party Policies", New Society, May 8.
- Boaden, N.T. (1970). X "Central Departments and Local Authorities: The Relationship re-examined", Political Studies, 18, 2, pp.175-86.
- Boaden, N.T. (1971). "Innovation and Change in English Local Government", Political Studies, 19, 4, pp.416-29.
- Boaden, N.T. (1971a). *Urban Policy-Making* (London, CUP).
- Bohannon, P. (1965). X "The Tiv of Nigeria", in Gibbs, J.L. (ed.), *Peoples of Africa* (London, Rinehart and Winston), pp.513-46.
- Boudeville, J.R. (1966). *Problems of Regional Economic Planning* (Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press).
- Braibanti, R. (ed.) (1969). *Political and Administrative Development* (Durham, Duke University Press).
- Brand, J. (1974). *Local Government Reform in England: 1888-1974* (London, Croom Helm).
- Brecht, A. (1959). *Political Theory: The Foundations of Twentieth-Century Political Thought* (Princeton, Princeton University Press).
- Brewar-Carias, A.R. (1976). "Administrative Reform Experience in Venezuela 1969-75: Strategies, Tactics and Perspectives", in Leemans, A.F. (ed). *The Management of Change in Government* (The Hague, Martinus Nijhoff), pp.213-37.
- Briggs, A. (1968). *Victorian Cities* (London, Penguin).


- Bristow, S. (1972). "The Criteria for Local Government Reorganization and Local Authority Autonomy", Policy and Politics, 1, pp.143-62.
- Brodrick, G. (1875). "Local Government in England", in Probyn, J.W. (ed.), Local Government and Taxation (London, Cassell, Peter & Galpin), pp.1-96.
- Bulpitt, J.G. (1963). "Party Systems in Local Government" Political Studies, 11, pp.11-35.
- Bulpitt, J.G. (1967). Party Politics in English Local Government (London, Longmans).
- Bulpitt, J.G. (1972). X "Participation and Local Government: Territorial Democracy", in Parry, G. (ed.), Participation in Politics (Manchester, Manchester University Press), pp.281-302.
- Butler, D. and Halsey, A.H. (eds.) (1978). Policy and Politics (London, Macmillan).
- Buxton, R. (1973). Local Government (Harmondsworth, Penguin).
- Caiden, G.E. (1970). Administrative Reform (London, Allen Lane).
- Caiden, G.E. (1973). "Development, Administrative Capacity and Administrative Reform", International Review of Administrative Sciences, 38, pp.327-44.
- Caiden, G.E. (1973a). "Impact and Implications of Administrative Reform for Administrative Behaviour and Performance", UN Inter-Regional Seminar on Major Administrative Reforms in Developing Countries, Vol.11, Technical Papers, (New York, United Nations), pp.26-44.
- Caiden, G.E. (1976). "Implementation - The Achilles Heel of Administrative Reform", in Leemans, A.F. (ed.), The Management of Change in Government (The Hague, Martinus Nijhoff), pp.142-64.
- Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation (1973). Current Issues in Community Work (London, Routledge and Kegan Paul).
- Cameron, D.C. (1934). f "Principles of Native Administration and Their Application" (Lagos, Government Printer).
- Cameron, D.C. (1937). "Native Administration in Tanganyika and Nigeria", Journal of the African Society, XXXVI, Supplement 29.
- Campbell, M.J. (1963). j "Law and Practice of Local Government in Northern Nigeria" (London, Sweet & Maxwell).

- Campbell, M.J. (1965). *X* "The Structure of Local Government", in Blitz, L.F., *The Politics and Administration of Nigerian Government* (Lagos, African Universities Press), pp.113-40.
- Campion, G.F.M. (1957). *British Government Since 1918* (London, George Allen and Unwin).
- Castro, A.C. (1976). "Administrative Reform in Mexico", in Leemans, A.F. (ed.), *The Management of Change in Government* (The Hague, Martinus Nijhoff), pp.185-212.
- Chester, D.N. (1951). *Central and Local Government* (London, Macmillan).
- Chin, R. and Benne, K.D. (1969). "General Strategies for Effecting Change in Human Systems", in Bennis, W.G., Benne, K.D. and Chin, R. (eds.), *The Planning of Change* (New York, Rinehart and Winston Inc.), pp.32-59.
- Clarke, C. (1977). *X* "Community Councils: Power to the People?", in Crouch, C. (ed.), *Participation in Politics* (London, Croom Helm), pp.110-42.
- Clarke, J.J. (1969). *Outlines of Local Government in the United Kingdom*, 20th edn. (London, Pitman).
- Cohen, A.R. (1976). "The Human Dimensions of Administrative Reform", in Leemans, A.F. (ed.), *The Management of Change in Government* (The Hague, Martinus Nijhoff) pp.165-81.
- Coleman, J.S. (1958). *Nigeria: Background to Nationalism* (Berkeley, University of California Press).
- Committee on Financial Aid to Political Parties (1976). Report, Cmd 6601 (London, HMSO).
- Committee of Inquiry into Local Government Finance (1976). Report, Cmd 6453 (London, HMSO).
- Committee on Local Authority and Allied Personal Social Services (1968). Report, Cmd 3703 (London, HMSO).
- Committee on the Management of Local Government (1967). Vol.1, Report; Vol.2, The Local Government Councillor; Vol.3, The Local Government Elector; Vol.4, Local Government Administration Abroad; Vol.5, Local Government Administration in England and Wales (London, HMSO).
- Committee on the Staffing of Local Government (1967). Report, (London, HMSO).
- Cornford, J. (1963). "The Transformation of Conservatism in the Late-Nineteenth Century", Victorian Studies, 7, pp.36-66.

- Cotterell, G.C.B. (1934). "Squeers at the Colonial Office", English Review, 58, pp.453-63.
- Cousins, P. (1977). "Theories of Democracy and Local Government", Public Administration Bulletin, 23, pp.40-53.
- Cowan, L.G. (1958). *X* Local Government in West Africa (New York, Columbia University Press).
- Crocker, W. (1936). Nigeria: A Critique of British Colonial Administration (London, George Allen and Unwin).
- Crossman, R.H.S. (1965). Municipal Review, 36, pp.655-60.
- Crossman, R.H.S. (1975). Diaries of a Cabinet Minister, Vol.1. (London, Hamish Hamilton and Cape).
- Dahl, R.A. (1947). "The Science of Public Administration", Public Administration Review, VII, pp.1-11.
- Dahl, R.A. (1961). *X* Who Governs: Democracy and Power in an American City (New Haven, Yale University Press).
- Davies, J.G. (1972). The Evangelistic Bureaucrat (London, Tavistock).
- Dearlove, J.D. (1973). The Politics of Policy in English Local Government (London, CUP).
- Dearlove, J.D. (1979). The Reorganization of British Local Government (Cambridge, CUP).
- Dennis, N. (1972). *X* Public Participation and Planners' Blight (London, Faber and Faber).
- Dent, M. (1980). *X* "Effective and Ineffective Constitutions", West Africa, September 29, pp.1885-1887.
- Deutsch, K.W. (1961). *X* "Social Mobilization and Political Development", American Political Science Review, 55, pp.493-514.
- Dimock, M.E.A. (1959). Administrative Vitality (New York, Harper).
- Dirk, van J.J.J. (1972). Organization in Change (Rotterdam, Rotterdam University Press).
- Donnisson, D.V. (1968). "Committees and Committeemen", New Society, April 18.
- Downs, A. (1967). Inside Bureaucracy (Boston, Little, Brown & Co.).
- Dror, Y. (1976). "Strategies for Administrative Reform", in Leemans, A.F. (ed.), The Management of Change in Government (The Hague, Martinus Nijhoff), pp.126-141.
- Dudley, B.J. (1968). Parties and Politics in Northern Nigeria (London, Frank Cass).

- Dunsire, A. (1956). "Accountability in Local Government", Administration (Dublin), 4, pp.80-88.
- Dunsire, A. (1973). Administration: The Word and the Science (Bristol, Western Printing Services Ltd.).
- Easton, D. (1961). "The Analysis of Political Systems", in Macridis and Brown (eds.), Comparative Politics (Homewood, The Dorsey Press Inc.).
- Easton, D. (1965). Systems Analysis of Political Life (New York, Wiley).
- Easton, D. (1965a). A Framework for Political Analysis (Englewood Cliffs, Prentice Hall).
- Eddison, T. (1973). Local Government: Management and Corporate Planning (Aylesbury, Leonard Hill).
- Esman, M.J. (1972). Administration and Development in Malaysia (Ithaca, Cornell University Press).
- Evans-Pritchard, E.E. (1940). The Nuer (Oxford, Clarendon Press).
- Fadahunsi, O. (1977). "The Politics of Local Administration in Western Nigeria", Quarterly Journal of Administration, xl, 1 & 2, pp.97-113.
- Fahm, S.T. (1963). "Post-Emergency Local Government in Western Nigeria", The Council, 11, March, pp.1-9.
- Federal Republic of Nigeria (1975). Third National Development Plan 1975-80: Revised Vol.11 (Lagos, Government Printer).
- Fesler, J. (1957). "Administrative Literature and the Second Hoover Commission Reports", American Political Science Review, 51, pp.135-57.
- Fesler, J. (1964). "Approach to the Understanding of Decentralization", Paper for the Sixth World Conference of the International Political Science Association, Geneva.
- Finan, W.F. and Dean, A.L. (1957). "Procedures for the Preparation and Implementation of Administrative Reforms". International Review of Administrative Sciences, 23, 4, pp.437-52.
- Finer, S.E. (1962). The Man on Horseback (London, Pall Mall).
- Fitzpatrick, J.F.J. (1924). "Nigeria's Curse - The Native Administration", National Review, 84, pp.617-24.
- Foster, C.D., Jackman, R.A. and Perlman, M. (1980). Local Government Finance in a Unitary State (London, George Allen and Unwin).

- Gibbs, J.L. (ed.) (1965). "Peoples of Africa" (New York, Rinehart and Winson Inc.).
- Goldsmith, M. (1979). "The Changing System of English Local Government", in Lagroye, J. and Wright, V. (eds.), Local Government in Britain and France (London, George Allen and Unwin), pp.10-27.
- Goodenough, W.H. (1963). Cooperation in Change (New York, Russell Sage Foundation).
- Gorvine, A. (1966). "Administrative Reform: Functions of Political and Economic Change", in Birkhead, G.S. (ed.), Administrative Problems in Pakistan (New York, Syracuse University Press), pp.185-211.
- Government of the Mid-West State of Nigeria (1974). White Paper on Development Administration, (Benin, Government Printer).
- Grant, W.P. (1971). "Local Parties in British Local Politics: A Framework for Empirical Analysis", Political Studies, 19, pp.201-12.
- Grant, W.P. (1972). "Non-Partisanship in British Local Politics", Policy and Politics, 1, pp.241-54.
- Green, B.S.R. (1968). Community Decision-Making in Georgian City, Ph.D. Thesis (Bath, University of Bath).
- Green, G. (1974). "Politics, Local Government and the Community", Local Government Studies, 8, pp.5-16.
- Green, L.P. (1959). Provincial Metropolis (London, George Allen and Unwin).
- Greenwood, R., Hinings, C.R. and Ranson, S. (1975). "Contingency Theory and the Organization of Local Authorities: Part 1. Differentiation and Integration", Public Administration, 53, pp.1-23.
- Greenwood, R., Hinings, C.R., Ranson, S., and Walsh, K. (1976). In Pursuit of Corporate Rationality (University of Birmingham, Institute of Local Government Studies).
- Greenwood, R., Smith, A.D., and Stewart, J.D. (1971). "Corporate Planning and the Chief Executive's Group", Local Government Studies, 1, pp.5-17.
- Gregory, R. (1969). "Local Elections and the 'rule of Anticipated Reactions'", Political Studies, XVII, 1, pp.31-47.
- Griffith, J.A.G. (1966). Central Departments and Local Authorities (London, George Allen and Unwin).

- Grosnick, L., and Mosher, F.C. (1973). "Administrative Reform: Goals, Strategies, Instruments and Techniques", Inter-Regional Seminar on Major Administrative Reforms in Developing Countries, Vol. 11, Technical Papers, (New York, United Nations), pp. 11-25.
- Groves, R.T. (1976). "Administrative Reform and Political Development", in Leemans, A.F. (ed.), The Management of Change in Government (The Hague, Martinus Nijhoff), pp. 99-113.
- Gulliver, P.H. (1963). Social Control in an African Society (London, Routledge and Kegan Paul).
- Gutteridge, W.F. (1964). Military Institutions and Power in the New States (London, Pall Mall).
- Gyford, J. (1976). Local Politics in Britain (London, Croom Helm).
- Hadfield, E. and MacColl, J.E. (1948). British Local Government (London, Hutchinson).
- Hadisumarto, D. and Siegel, G.B. (1976). "The Optimum Strategy Matrix and Indonesian Administrative Reforms", in Leemans, A.F. (ed.), The Management of Change in Government (The Hague, Martinus Nijhoff), pp. 252-71.
- Hailey, Lord (1951). Native Administration in the British African Territories, Part 111: West Africa-Nigeria, Gold Coast, Sierra Leone, The Gambia, 5 Vols. (London, HMSO).
- Hailey, Lord (1957). An African Survey: Revised 1956 (London, OUP).
- Hampton, W. (1970).  Democracy and Community (London, OUP).
- Hanson, A.H. (1956). Financing Local Government, Fabian Research Series no. 178 (London, Fabian Society).
- Hanson, A.H. (1963). "Decentralization", A Paper Written for the Round Table Meeting of the International Political Science Association, Oxford.
- Harris, R. (1978). "Communications and the Rate Support Grant Process", Linkages, July.
- Hart, W. (1965). "Some Administrative Problems of Local Government", Paper delivered at IMTA Eastbourne Conference 10 June.
- Hart, W. (1966). "The Conurbations and the Regions", Political Quarterly, 37, pp. 128-38.
- Hart, W. and Garner, J. (1973). Hart's Introduction to the Law of Local Government and Administration (London, Butterworths).
- Heady, F. (1966). Public Administration: A Comparative Perspective (Englewood Cliffs, Prentice Hall).
- Helleiner, G.K. (1966). Peasant Agriculture, Government and Economic Growth in Nigeria, (Homewood, Irwin).



- Hennock, E.P. (1973). *Fit and Proper Persons* (London, Edward Arnold).
- Hepworth, N.P. (1970). *The Finance of Local Government*, rev.edn. (London, George Allen and Unwin).
- Hicks, U.K. (1961). *Development from Below* (Oxford, Clarendon Press).
- Hill, D.M. (1970). *Participating in Local Affairs* (Harmondsworth, Penguin).
- Hill, D.M. (1974). *Democratic Theory and Local Government* (London, George Allen and Unwin).
- Hinings, C.R., Greenwood, R., and Ranson, S. (1975). "Contingency Theory and Organization of Local Authorities: Part 11. Contingencies and Structure", Public Administration, 53, pp.169-90.
- Hinings, C.R., Ranson, S., and Greenwood, R. (1974). "The Reorganization of Metropolitan Government: The Impact of Bains", Local Government Studies, 9, pp.47-54.
- Humes, S. (1969). "The Structure of Local Government", The Future of Local Government in Nigeria: Report of the National Conference on Local Government held at the Institute of Administration, University of Ife, April 29-May 3, 1969 (Ile-Ife, University of Ife Press), pp.63-78.
- Humes, S. (1970). "Local Government", Quarterly Journal of Administration, 5, 1, pp.91-110.
- Jackson, P.W. (1970). *Local Government* (London, Butterworths).
- Jackson, W.E. (1963). *Local Government in England and Wales* (Harmondsworth, Penguin).
- Jennings, W.I. (1947). *Principles of Local Government Law*, 3rd edn. (London, University of London Press).
- Johnson, S. (1921). *The History of the Yorubas* (London, Routledge and Kegan Paul).
- Jones, G.I. (1962). "Ibo Age Organization, with Special Reference to the Cross River and North-Eastern Ibo", Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, 92, pp.191-210.
- Jones, G.W. (1963). "The Local Government Commission and the County Borough Extensions", Public Administration, 41, 2, pp.173-87.

- Jones, G.W. (1964). "County Borough Expansion: The Local Government Commission's Views", Public Administration, 42,3, pp.277-90.
- Jones, G.W. (1969). "The Redcliffe-Maud Report: The Implications for Local Democracy", PAC Bulletin, 7, pp.3-20.
- Jones, G.W. (1969a). Borough Politics (London, Macmillan).
- Jones, G.W. (1973). "The Local Government Act 1972 and the Redcliffe-Maud Commission", Political Quarterly, 44,2, pp.154-66.
- Jones, G.W. (ed.) (1980). New Approaches to the Study of Central-Local Government Relationships (Westmead, Gower).
- Kaduna State (1977). Local Government Edict No.1 of 1977 (Kaduna, Government Printer).
- Kano State (1977). Local Government Edict No.5 of 1977 (Kano, Government Printer).
- Kaufman, H. (1971). The Limits of Organizational Change (Alabama, Alabama University Press).
- Keith-Lucas, B. (1952). The English Local Government Franchise: A Short History (Oxford, Basil Blackwell).
- Keith-Lucas, B. (1977). English Local Government in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries (London, The Historical Association).
- Keith-Lucas, B. and Jones, B.C. (1963). Report on the Administration of the Lagos Town Council (Lagos, Government Printer).
- Keith-Lucas, B. and Richards, P.G. (1978). A History of Local Government in the Twentieth Century (London, George Allen and Unwin).
- Khan, J. (1975). "Administrative Change and Development in Barbados", International Review of Administrative Sciences, 41, pp.149-58.
- Kirk-Greene, A.H.M. (1965). "Bureaucratic Cadres in a Traditional Milieu", in Coleman, J.S. (ed.), Education and Political Development (Princeton, Princeton University Press), pp.373-407.
- Kirk-Greene, A.H.M. (1971). Crisis and Conflict in Nigeria: A Documentary Source Book, 1966-1970 (2 Vols., London, OUP).
- Koenigsberger, O., Abrams, C., Kobe, S., Shapiro, M., and Wheeler, M. (1964). Metropolitan Lagos (New York, United Nations).

- Kolawole,A. (1979). "State/Local Government Relations in Nigeria: the case of Kwara State", paper presented to the National Conference on Local Government Reforms, A.B.U., Zaria, 14th May-17th May.
- Kwara State (1976). Kwara State Statistical Digest (Ilorin, Government Printer).
- Kwara State (1976a). Local Government Edict No.8 of 1976 (Ilorin, Government Printer).
- Kwara State (1977). Report of the Kwara State Steering Committee on Local Government Elections (Ilorin, Government Printer).
- Kwara State (1978). Edu Local Government 1977-78 Approved Estimates (Ilorin, Government Printer).
- Labour Party (1942). The Future of Local Government: The Labour Party's Post-War Policy (London,Labour Party).
- Labour Party (1977). Regional Authorities and Local Government Reform (London, Labour Party).
- Lagroye,J. and Wright,V.(eds.) (1979). Local Government in Britain and France (London, George Allen and Unwin).
- Landau,M.(1965). "Due Process of Inquiry", The American Behavioural Scientist, 9,2,pp.4-10.
- Landau,M.(1966). "Sociology as the Study of Formal Organization", in The Study of Organizational Behaviour, Papers in Comparative Public Administration, 8 (Washington,D.C., American Society of Public Administration) pp.37-52.
- Langrod,G.(1953). "Local Government and Democracy", Public Administration, 31,pp.25-34.
- LaPiere,R.T.(1954). A New Theory of Social Control (New York, McGraw-Hill).
- Laski,H.J.(1938). "The Colonial Civil Service", Political Quarterly, 1X, pp.541-551.
- Lawrence,P.R. and Lorsch,J.W.(eds.) (1969). Developing Organizations: Diagnosis and Action (Reading: Mass., Addison-Wesley).
- Lee,H.(1970). "An Application of Innovation Theory to the Strategy of Administrative Reform in Developing Countries", Policy Sciences,1,pp.77-89.

- Lee, H. (1976). "Bureaucratic Models and Administrative Reform" in Leemans A.F. (ed.), *The Management of Change in Government* (The Hague, Martinus Nijhoff), pp.114-25.
- Lee, J.M. (1963). *Social Leaders and Public Persons* (Oxford, Clarendon Press).
- Lee, J.M., Wood, B., Solomon, B.W., and Walters, P. (1974). *The Scope of Local Initiative* (London, Martin Robertson).
- Leemans, A.F. (ed.) (1976). *The Management of Change in Government* (The Hague, Martinus Nijhoff).
- Legum, C. (ed.) (1977). *African Contemporary Record: Annual Survey and Documents 1976-77* (London, Rex Collings).
- Leys, N. (1931). *A Last Chance in Kenya* (London, Hogarth Press).
- Lipset, S.M. (1964). "Introduction", in Ostrogorski, M., *Democracy and the Organization of Political Parties* (New York, Anchor Books).
- Lloyds, T. (1965). "Uncontested Seats in British General Elections, 1852-1910", Historical Journal, 2, pp.260-5.
- Lloyd, P.C. (1965a). "The Yoruba of Nigeria", in Gibbs, J.L. (ed.), *Peoples of Africa* (London, Rinehart and Winston Inc.), pp.549-582.
- Local Government: *Areas and Status of Local Authorities in England and Wales* (1956). Cmd 9831. (London, HMSO).
- Local Government Boundary Commission (1947). *Report of the Year 1947* (London, HMSO).
- Local Government Commission for England (1961). *Report and Proposals for the West Midlands Special Review Area* (London, HMSO).
- Local Government in England: *Government Proposals for Reorganization* (1971). Cmd 4584 (London, HMSO).
- Local Government in England and Wales During the Period of Reconstruction (1945). Cmd 6579 (London, HMSO).
- Local Government Finance (1977). Cmd 6813 (London, HMSO).
- Local Government Year Book 1973/74: *The Northern States of Nigeria* (1974). (Zaria, Institute of Administration).
- Lowell, A.L. (1908). *The Government of England* (2 Vols., London, Macmillan).
- Lugard, Lord (1920). *Report on the Amalgamation of Northern and Southern Nigeria, and Administration: 1912-1919*, Cmd 468 (London, HMSO).

- Lugard, Lord (1965). The Dual Mandate in British Tropical Africa (with a new introduction by Margery Perham) 5th.edn.(1st edn.,1922) (London,Cass).
- MacColl, J.E. (1949). "The Party System in English Local Government", Public Administration, 27, pp.69-75.
- Macmillan, W.M. (1934). "The Importance of the Educated African", Journal of the Royal African Society, XXXIII, pp.137-42.
- Maddick, H. (1963). Democracy, Decentralization and Development (Bombay, Asia Publishing House).
- Mallaby, G. (1974). "Sober and Steady Look at Local Government", Local Government Chronicle, 17 May.
- Marcuse, H. (1973). An Essay on Liberation (Harmondsworth, Penguin).
- Marshall, A.H. (1960). Financial Administration in Local Government (London, George Allen and Unwin).
- Marshall, A.H. (1971). New Revenues for Local Government; Fabian Research Series No.295 (London, Fabian Society).
- Martin, R.C. (ed.) (1965). Public Administration and Society (Syracuse, Syracuse University Press.)
- McClosky, H. (1968). "Political Participation", in Sills, D.L. (ed.), International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, Vol.12 (New York, Macmillan and Free Press), pp.252-65.
- McGrath, F.D. (1969). "Field Administration and Local Government in Western Nigeria", Quarterly Journal of Administration, 111, 3, pp.183-95.
- Meadows, P. (1963). "Motivation for Change and Development Administration", in Swerdlow, I. (ed.), Development Administration (Syracuse, Syracuse University Press), pp.85-102.
- Melson, R. and Wolpe, H. (eds.) (1971). Nigeria: Modernization and the Politics of Communalism (East Lansing, Michigan State University Press).
- Mill, J.S. (1968). Representative Government. Everyman Edition (London, Dent).
- Miller, W.R.S. (1947). Have We Failed in Nigeria? (London, Lutterworth Press).
- Ministry of Economic Planning, Northern Nigeria (1966). Statistical Yearbook (Kaduna, Government Printer).

- Mittlebeeler, E.V. (1971). "Legal Control Over Local Government in the Western State of Nigeria", Quarterly Journal of Administration, V, 2, pp. 197-206.
- Moharir, V.V. (1976). "Administrative Reforms in India", in Leemans, A.F. (ed.), The Management of Change in Government (The Hague, Martinus Nijhoff), pp. 238-51.
- Money, W.J. (1973). X "The Need to Sustain a Viable System of Local Democracy", Urban Studies, 10, pp. 319-33.
- Montgomery, J.D. (1967). Sources of Bureaucratic Reform: Problems of Power, Purpose and Politics (Bloomington, Comparative Administration Group).
- Montgomery, J.D. (1969). "Sources of Bureaucratic Reform: Typology of Purpose and Politics", in Braibanti, R. (ed.), Political and Administrative Development (Durham, Duke University Press), pp. 427-71.
- Morris, D.S. and Newton, K. (1970). "Profile of a Local Political Elite: Businessmen as Community Decision-Makers in Birmingham, 1838-1966", The New Atlantis, 2, pp. 111-23.
- Morton, J. (1970). The Best Laid Schemes? A Cool Look at Local Government Reform (London, Charles Knight).
- Mosher, F.C. (1965). "Some Notes on Reorganization in Public Agencies", in Martin, R.C. (ed.), Public Administration and Democracy (Syracuse, Syracuse University Press).
- Mosher, F.C. (ed.) (1967), Governmental Reorganizations: Cases and Commentary (Indianapolis, Bobbs-Merrill).
- Mouzelis, N.P. (1970). Organization and Bureaucracy: An Analysis of Modern Theories (Chicago, Aldine).
- Munro, W.B. (1913). The Government of American Cities (New York, Macmillan).
- Murray, D.J. (1969). The Work of Administration in Nigeria (London, Hutchinson).
- Nemetz, D.E. (1971). "A Symposium: Selected Problems in Local Government", Nigerian Journal of Public Affairs, 2, 1, pp. 5-19.
- Neumann, S. (1957). "Comparative Politics: A Half-Century Appraisal", Journal of Politics, pp. 369-90.
- Neve, B. (1977). "Bureaucracy and Politics in Local Government: The Role of Local Authority Education Officers", Public Administration, 55, pp. 291-303.

- Newton, K. (1974). "Community Performance in Britain",  
Current Sociology, 22, pp. 49-86.
- Newton, K. (1976). Second City Politics (Oxford, Clarendon Press).
- Niven, C.R. (1937). A Short History of Nigeria (London, Longmans).
- North Central State (1975). Statistical Yearbook 1975 (Kaduna, Government Printer).
- North Western State (1971). Statistical Handbook (Sokoto, Government Printer).
- Norton, A. (1980). "Britain: England and Wales", in Rowat, D.C. (ed.), International Handbook on Local Government Reorganization (London, Aldwych Press). pp. 261-74.
- Oakeshott, M.J. (1962). Rationalism in Politics (London, Methuen).
- Odenigwe, G.A. (1973). "Divisional Administration: A New Structure of Local Government in the East Central State of Nigeria", Journal of Administration Overseas, 12, 2, pp. 100-111.
- Aola, R. and Olowu, D. (1977). "Recent Administrative Developments in Nigeria", Quarterly Journal of Administration, X1, 4, pp. 299-307.
- Olowu, D. (1979). "Urban Local Government Under the 1976 Local Government Reform: An Appraisal", Paper Presented to the National Conference on Local Government Reform, A.B.U., Zaria.
- Orewa, G.O. (1966). Local Government Finance in Nigeria (London, Oxford University Press).
- Orewa, G.O. (1968). "Financial Administration and the Theory of Size in Local Government", Quarterly Journal of Administration, 11, 4, pp. 221-32.
- Orewa, G.O. (1977). "Government Grants to Local Government in Comparative Perspectives", Paper Presented at the National Conference on Local Government Reform, University of Ife.
- Orewa, G.O. (1978). "The Role of Traditional Rulers in Administration", Quarterly Journal of Administration, X11, 2, pp. 151-65.
- Organic Change in Local Government (1979). Cmd. 7457, (London, HMSO).
- Ormsby-Gore, W.G.A. and Amery, L.S. (1928/9). "Problems and Developments in Africa", Journal of the African Society, XXV111, pp. 325-39.

- Ostrogorski, M. (1902). Democracy and the Organisation of Political Parties (2 Vols., London, Macmillan).
- Ottenberg, P. (1965). "The Afikpo Ibo of Eastern Nigeria", in Gibbs, J.L. (ed.), Peoples of Africa, (London, Rinehart and Winston Inc), pp.3-39.
- Oyediran, O. (1973). "Town Councillors: A study of Elected Representatives in Three Councils in Western Nigeria", Quarterly Journal of Administration, VII, 4, pp.453-62.
- Oyediran, O. (1974). "Local Government in Southern Nigeria: The Direction of Change", African Review, 4, 4, pp.543-55.
- Oyediran, O. (1974a). "Reorganization of the Nigerian Federation: Its Background and Administrative Problems", Phillipine Journal of Public Administration, 18, 3, pp.226-44.
- Oyediran, O. (1977). ✕ "Participation in the Nigerian 1976 Local Government Elections", The Nigerian Journal of Economic and Social Studies, 19, 1, pp.17-33.
- Oyediran, O. (ed.) (1979). Nigerian Government and Politics Under Military Rule 1966-79 (London, Macmillan).
- Pahl, R. (1968). Readings in Urban Sociology (Oxford, Pergamon).
- Panter, Brick, S.K. (ed.) (1970). Nigerian Politics and Military Rule: Prelude to Civil War (London, University of London for the Institute of Commonwealth Studies).
- Parsons, T. (1956). "Suggestions for a Sociological Approach to the Theory of Organizations", Administrative Science Quarterly, 1, June-Sept., pp.225-39.
- Pateman, C. (1974). Participation and Democratic Theory (London, CUP).
- Pearce, C. (1980). The Machinery of Change in Local Government 1888-1974 (London, George Allen and Unwin).
- Peil, M. (1976). Nigerian Politics (London, Casselle and Co.Ltd.)
- Perroux, F. (1950). "Economic Space: Theory and Application", Quarterly Journal of Economics, 46, 1, pp.89-104.
- Policy for the Inner Cities (1977). Cmnd 6845 (London, HMSO).
- Post, K. (1964). The New States of West Africa (Harmondsworth, Penguin).
- Pressman, J.L. and Wildavsky, A. (1973). Implementation (Berkeley, University of California Press).



- Prime Minister's Committee on Local Government Rules of Conduct (1974).  
Report, Cmnd 5236 (London, HMSO).
- Public Service Review Commission (1974). Main Report (Lagos, Federal  
Republic of Nigeria Government Printer).
- Quarterly Journal of Administration (1968). "Administration of the New  
States of Nigeria", Special Number 11,3,  
(Ibadan, University of Ife).
- Quarterly Journal of Administration (1969). "Local Government in Nigeria";  
Special Number, 111,3, (Ibadan, University of Ife).
- Rae, D.W. (1971). The Political Consequences of Electoral Laws,  
Rev. edn. (New Haven, Yale University Press).
- Raglan, Lord (1923). "Crime and Punishment in Africa", Nineteenth  
Century and After, 93, pp. 575-82.
- Randal, L.K. (1967). "What Are Managers For? Personnel Administration,  
Jan-Feb., pp. 1-9.
- Raphaelli, N. (1967). Readings in Comparative Public Administration  
(Boston, Allyn and Bacon Inc.).
- Rattray, R.S. (1934). "Present Tendencies of African Colonial  
Government", Journal of the Royal African Society,  
XXXI, pp. 22-36.
- Redcliffe-Maud, Lord (1967). "Local Governors at Work: Could They Do  
Better", Public Administration, 45, pp. 347-52.
- Redcliffe-Maud, Lord and Wood, B. (1974). English Local Government Reformed  
(London, Oxford University Press).
- Redlich, J. (1903). Local Government in England, edited and with additions  
by Hirst, F.W. (2 Vols., London, Macmillan).
- Reform of Local Government in England (1970). Cmnd 4276 (London, HMSO).
- Rhodes, G. (1970). The Government of London: The Struggle for  
Reform (London, Weidenfeld and Nicolson).
- Rhodes, G. (1975). Committees of Inquiry (London, George Allen  
and Unwin).
- Rhodes, R.A.W. (1973). "The Politics of Policy", Local Government  
Chronicle, 28 September, pp. 1026-7.
- Richards, P.G. (1968). The New Local Government System (London, George  
Allen and Unwin).
- Richards, P.G. (1973). The Reformed Local Government System (London,  
George Allen and Unwin).

- Richards,P.G.(1978). The Reformed Local Government System, 3rd.edn. (London,George Allen and Unwin).
- Riggs,F.W.(1962). "An Ecological Approach: The Sala Model", in Heady,F. and Stokes,S.(eds.), Papers in Comparative Administration (Ann Arbor, University of Michigan).
- Riggs,F.W.(1964). Administration in Developing Countries (Boston, Houghton Mifflin Company).
- Riggs,F.W.(ed.) (1971). Frontiers in Development Administration (Durham, Duke University Press).
- Rivers,W.H.R.(1968). Social Organization (London,Dawsons of Pall Mall).
- Rivers State (1976). Local Government Edict No. 8 of 1976 (Port Harcourt, Government Printer).
- Robson,W.A.(1931). The Development of Local Government (London, George Allen and Unwin).
- Robson,W.A.(1952). Problems of Nationalised Industry (London, George Allen and Unwin).
- Robson,W.A.(1966). Local Government in Crisis (London,George Allen and Unwin).
- Robson,W.A.(1972). "The Great Cities of Today", in Robson,W.A. and Regan,D.E.(eds.), Great Cities of the World, 3rd edn.(2 Vols.,London,George Allen and Unwin), Vol.1,pp.23-127.
- Rose-Ackerman,S.(1978). Corruption: A study in Political Economy (London,Academic Press).
- Rowat,D.C.(1980). International Handbook on Local Government Reorganization (London,Aldwych Press).
- Royal Commission on the Constitution (1973). Research Papers 7, "Devolution and Other Aspects of Government: An Attitudes Survey" (London,HMSO).
- Royal Commission on Local Government in England (1969). Report,Cmnd 4040 (London,HMSO).
- Royal Commission on Local Government in Greater London (1960). Report, Cmnd 1164 (London,HMSO).
- Royal Commission on Local Government in Scotland (1969). Report, Cmnd 4150; Written Evidence 9 (Edinburgh,HMSO).
- Royal Commission on Standards in Public Life (1976). Report, Cmnd 1728 (London,HMSO).

- Rubinstein,W.D. (1977). "Wealth,Elites and the Class Structure of Modern Britain", Past and Present,76,pp.99-126.
- Sacton,A. (1976). "British Socialist Theory of the Division of Power by Area", Political Studies,24,pp.158-71.
- Sangree,W.H. (1965). "The Bantu Tiriki of Western Kenya", in Gibbs,J.L. (ed.), Peoples of Africa (London,Rinehart and Winston Inc.), pp.41-79.
- Sartori,G. (1970). "Concept of Misformation in Comparative Politics", The American Political Science Review,64.
- Seeley,I.H. (1978). Local Government Explained (London,Macmillan).
- Seidman,H. (1970). Politics,Position and Power (New York, Oxford University Press).
- Self,P. (1972). Administrative Theories and Politics (London, George Allen and Unwin).
- Sharkansky,I. (1970). Public Administration: Policy-Making in Government Agencies (Chicago,Markham).
- Sharpe,L.J. (1965). Why Local Democracy? Fabian Tract No.361 (London,Fabian Society).
- Sharpe,L.J. (1967). "In Defence of Local Politics", in Sharpe,L.J. (ed.), Voting in Cities (London,Macmillan).
- Sharpe,L.J. (1970). "Theories and Values of Local Government", Political Studies,18,2,pp.157-74.
- Sharpe,L.J. (1978). "Reforming the Grass Roots: An Alternative Analysis", in Butler,D. and Halsey,A.H. (eds.), Policy and Politics (London,Macmillan),pp.82-110.
- Siegel,G.B. (1966). "The Strategy for Public Administration Reform: The Case of Brazil", Public Administration Review, 26,1,pp.45-55.
- Siffin,W.J. (1957). Toward the Comparative Study of Public Administration (Westport,Greenwood Press).
- Simon,E.D. (1926). A City Council from Within (London,Longmans and Green)
- Simon,E.D. (1938). A Century of City Government: Manchester 1838-1938 (London,George Allen and Unwin).
- Singh,I. (1955). "Reorganizing the Indian Income-Tax Department", Indian Journal of Public Administration,1,3, pp.224-39.
- Smellie,K.B. (1946). A History of Local Government (London,George Allen and Unwin).

- Smith,A.G.(1968). North Central State: Finances of Native Authorities; A Forward Survey of the Overall Financial Position (Kaduna, Government Printer).
- Smith,B.C.(1967). "The Evolution of Local Government in Northern Nigeria", Journal of Administration Overseas, Vl,1,pp.28-42.
- Smith,B.C.(1972). "Field Administration and Political Change: The Case of Northern Nigeria", Administrative Science Quarterly, 17,pp.99-109.
- Smith,B.C.(1976). Policy-Making in British Government: An Analysis of Power and Rationality (Oxford,Martin Robertson).
- Smith,B.C. and Owajaiye,G.S.(1981)."Constitutional, Legal and Political Problems of Local Government in Nigeria", Public Administration and Development, 1,3, pp.211-24.
- Smith,B.C. and Stanyer,J.(1968). "Administrative Developments in 1967: A Survey", Public Administration,46,pp.239-79.
- Smith,B.C. and Stanyer,J.(1976). Administering Britain, paperback issue (Oxford,Martin Robertson).
- Smith,G.,Lees,R.,and Topping,P.(1977). "Participation and the Home Office Community Development Project", in Crouch,C. (ed.), Participation in Politics (London, Croom Helm), pp.237-272.
- Smith,M.(1886). "The Domain of Political Science", Political Science Quarterly,1,1,pp.1-8.
- Smith,M.G.(1960). Government in Zazzau,1800-1950,(London,OUP).
- Smock,A.C.(1971). "The Political Role of Ibo Ethnic Unions", in Melson,R. and Wolpe,H. (eds.), Nigeria: Modernization and the Politics of Communalism (East Lansing,Michigan State University Press), pp.320-41.
- Stacey,F.(1975). British Government 1966-1975 (London,OUP).
- Stacey,M.(1960). Tradition and Change (London,OUP).
- Stanyer,J.(1970). "The Local Government Commissions", in Wiseman, H.V.(ed.), Local Government in England 1958-69 (London,Routledge and Kegan Paul), pp.15-41.
- Stanyer,J.(1976). Understanding Local Government (London,Fontana).
- Stewart,F.H.(1977). Fundamentals of Age-Group Systems (London, Academic Press).

- Stewart, J.D. (1969). "New Approach to Management in Local Government". Local Government Chronicle, pp.2211-2.
- Stewart, J.D. (1975). "Corporate Control Can Only Go So Far" Municipal Review, March.
- Stones, P. (1968). Local Government for Students 3rd edn; 1st edn., 1963 (London, Macdonald and Evans Ltd.).
- Swerdlow, I. (1963). Development Administration (Syracuse, Syracuse University Press).
- Summerhayes, G. (1969). "The Changing Relations Between the N.A.s. and the New Northern States", Quarterly Journal of Administration, 111, 3, pp.207-220.
- Taylor, D.H. (1972). "Local Government 1974: The Challenge of Management", District Councils Review, October, pp.251-2.
- Thomas, J.M. and Bennis, W.G. (eds.) (1972). Management of Change and Conflict (Harmondsworth, Penguin).
- Thompson, P. (1967). Socialists, Liberals and Labour: The Struggle for London, 1885-1924 (London, Routledge and Kegan Paul).
- Thompson, V.A. (1965/6). "Bureaucracy and Innovation", Administrative Science Quarterly, 10, pp.1-20.
- Turner, F.J. (1920). The Frontiers in American History (New York, Henry Holt).
- United Nations (1973). Inter-Regional Seminar on Major Administrative Reforms in Developing Countries, 1971, Vol.1: Report of the Seminar (New York, United Nations).
- UNESCO (1967). Statistical Yearbook (Paris, UNESCO).
- Van Bertallanffy, L. (1956). "General Systems Theory", in General Systems, 1.
- Waldo, D. (ed.) (1971). Public Administration in a Time of Turbulence (Scranton, Chandler).
- Walker, P. (1970). Hansard (Commons), 18 February, Col.447.
- Warren, J.H. (1952). "The Party System in Local Government", in Bailey, S.D. (ed.), The British Party System (London, Hansard Society), pp.177-92.
- Warren, J.H. (1963). The English Local Government System, 7th edn. (London, George Allen and Unwin).
- Weatherhead, A. (Sir) (1963). "Review Article: Local Government in Developing Countries", Journal of Local Administration Overseas 19, 3, pp.167-9.

- Weiner, M. (1971). "Political Participation: Crisis of the Political Process", in Binder, L. et al (eds.) *Crises and Sequences in Political Development* (Princeton, Princeton University Press), pp.159-204.
- Welsh Office (1971). *The Reform of Local Government in Wales* (Cardiff, HMSO).
- Western Nigeria House of Assembly Debates (1952). First session (Ibadan, Government Printer).
- Western Nigeria (1967). *Abstract of Local Government Statistics, 11,2*, (Ibadan, Government Printer).
- Western State (1971). *Proposals for the Reorganization of Local Government in the Western State of Nigeria: Official Document no.4 of 1971* (Ibadan, Government Printer).
- Wheare, K.C. (1955). *Government by Committee* (Oxford, Clarendon Press).
- Whitaker, C.S. (1970). *The Politics of Tradition, Continuity and Change in Northern Nigeria, 1946-1966* (Princeton, Princeton University Press).
- Wildavsky, A. (1966). "The Political Economy of Efficiency: Cost-Benefit Analysis, Systems Analysis, and Program Budgeting", *Public Administration Review*, 26, pp.292-310.
- Wiseman, H.V. (ed.) (1970). *Local Government in England, 1958-69* (London, Routledge and Kegan Paul).
- X Wood, B. (1976). *The Process of Local Government Reform* (London, George Allen and Unwin).
- Working Group on Local Authority Management Structures (Bains) (1972). *The New Local Authorities: Management and Structure* (London, HMSO).
- f Wraith, R. (1972). *Local Administration in West Africa, 2nd edn.* (1st edn:1964) (London, George Allen and Unwin).
- Wraith, R. and Simpkins, E. (1963). *Corruption in Developing Countries* (London, George Allen and Unwin).
- f Yahaya, A.D. (1975). "Enhancing Local Government Performance: the Udoji Recipe", *Nigerian Journal of Public Affairs*, V, 1, pp.21-30.
- Young, K. (1975). *Local Politics and the Rise of Party* (Leicester, Leicester University Press).

- Zimmerman, J.F. (1970). State and Local Government  
( London, Barnes and Noble Books).
- Zimmern, A. (1934). The Third British Empire (London,  
Oxford University Press).